

⁴¹⁷
Presumption no Proof :

OR,

Mr. *PETTO*'s ARGUMENTS

FOR

INFANT-BAPTISM,

Considered and Answered.

AND

Infants Interest in the Covenant of Grace
without Baptism, asserted and maintained.

Whereunto is prefixed

An ANSWER to two QUESTIONS
propounded by Mr. *Firmin*, about In-
fants Church-membership and Baptism.

By THOMAS GRANTHAM.

The Earth also is defiled under the Inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the Laws, changed the Ordinance, broken the everlasting Covenant. Isa. 24. 5.

Now I praise you, Brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the Ordinances, as I delivered them to you, 1 Cor. 11. 2.

London, Printed in the Year, 1687.



To the READER.

IT appears by Mr. Petto's Epistle to the Reader, that he took hold of a very slight occasion to write against the Baptized Believers; it was, because one (without acquainting him with it) came over to their Communion.

I could wish he had been more patient under so small a trial, and thereby saved me this labour: which whether it will end here I know not; that may be as he pleases.

I hold it no convenient time for Dissenters to write one against another; Friendly Conferences might do much better. But I have found Men of Mr. Petto's Principles very averse to that, when it has been offered.

I have not answered each particular Page in Mr. Petto's Book, for that one and the same thing is very often repeated. I have chiefly dealt with his two main Arguments, on which his whole Discourse depends.

What he says about the mode of Sprinkling, I have not meddled with, nor is it needful. For we see that generally, such as are seriously convinced of their Duty in the case of Baptism, will not, if they might, receive it but in the way of Immersion. They are presently apprehensive that no way can be so safe for them, as to follow Christ himself, who it's certain was baptized so: For it is granted by the Learned, that Mark 1. 9. καὶ ἐβεβαπτίσθη ἐν τῷ ἰορδάνῳ εἰς ἵεροδολῶν, may be truly read, And was dipped of John into Jordan. This account of our Saviour's Baptism is sufficient to decide this Controversy, about the manner of Baptism, if the highest and most perfect Example that ever was be of any force at all.

What I have offered on behalf of Infants Interest in the Covenant of Grace, may perhaps seem too full of Charity in the

Judgment of Mr. Petto and some others. But if that offend thee, do but consider from whom this Doctrine of Infants Damnation has proceeded, it's either of God or Man. I have searched the Scriptures, but could never find his Word (that is Truth it self) declare such a dreadful Sentence against any one Infant, much less that the greatest part of dying Infants are damn'd.

Could Men be satisfied of the certainty of the Salvation of their dying Infants, the Controversy about baptising them would come to an End; for as far as I could ever learn, it came into the World upon this Mistake, that they could not be sav'd without it.

And tho Mr. Petto seems to dislike Cyprian's Judgment herein, yet what does he say less himself in p. 1. where he insinuates that those who deny the Baptism of Infants, exclude millions out of the great Charter of Heaven. But this may perhaps be found their Fault, who exclude all-but the Infants of such as they count Believers, when the reckoning comes to be truly stated.

I never saw Mr. Firmin's Book till I had answered Mr. Petto. And at the request of some, as also for that his Questions may seem to be serious and considerable, I thought it needful to give a serious and Christian Answer to them, which I hope I have done. And as I must commend Christians in their Enquiry, what Evidence of God's Love we have concerning Infants, and therein be an Enquirer as much as any, having Children of my own; so I think it needful to caution myself and others, that we set not up our own Devices for such Evidences, lest our Hope be thereby lessened, seeing our imposing that upon Infants which God has not required at our hands, is no sign of his Love to them at all.

Tho. Grantham.



The P R E F A C E.

Containing Brief Answers to two Questions, propounded by Mr. Giles Firmin, in his Book called, *The Plea of the Children of believing Parents.*

BECAUSE Mr. Firmin's Questions bear date, four years before Mr. Petto's Arguments, I will give them Precedence in my answering them.

Their Books are much of one quality, save that Mr. Firmin's abounds with more unkindly Reflections upon many, in which kind of dealing it were easy to give Retaliation; but that is not commendable.

What he writes against Mr. Danvers, I leave to him to vindicate himself, as he has done against others, and that very well, either by justifying his Authorities, or rectifying such Over-sights, as might easily befall the most accurate Writer in such a multitude of Quotations; and which I am persuaded would much satisfy Mr. Firmin himself, would he impartially read the Controversies.

Mr. Firmin being a wiser Man than to engage closely in the Question about the Divine Authority for Infant-Baptism, maintains his Fight at a great distance, save that he plays a little with some Arguments, rather of other Mens devising than his own. He at last comprehends the whole strength of his Discourse in two Questions; and ONLY desires some Answer to them, from those whom he is pleased constantly to call *Anabaptists*.

I know no such Creature, yet I know that he means those Christians who, according to God's Word, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* make Baptism the third (not the first) Principle of Christ's Doctrine. In which order the first and best of Gospel-Churches received it, even that which was founded by Christ himself, in the exercise of his Ministry, and which is therefore the Mother of all Churches Christian; in which Church, consisting of believing *Jews*, their Children had as clear an Interest in the Covenant of Grace as any can pretend to, and as great Privileges in the Church Christian as was, or is needful for any; and yet whoever reads the Plantation and Progress of that Church, or the Epistle which was written to them

on the occasion of some Decays, which afterward befel them, shall never find so much as one Infant baptised in that Church, nor indeed in any other during the Apostles Days; which Consideration alone is enough to cause a modest Enquirer to question the Legality of Infant-Baptism. Mr. *Firmin* has got Infant-Baptism into a very little Corner, it belongs only to *Children of believing Parents* [in an Independent or Presbyterian Sense] so that a great Part of the World called Christendom, will have no Right to it. And he makes it very insignificant to a great number of these two, for pag. 33. he does not make God to be INDEED their God, till with his Call he gives them Faith to answer his Call. And this is the reason (I suppose) why they deny these so pretendedly holy Infants, whom they sprinkle, any Priviledg in their Church at the Lord's Table, till they covenant again, which is commonly 20, 30 or 40 years after they have sprinkled them. For which strange Practice they have not the least Tittle in God's Word to warrant it; and where then they can find a Rule for this Practice I know not.

I have been told that Mr. *Firmin's* Questions are taken by some to be unanswerable: Let us therefore view them in his Words *verbatim*.

The first is thus.

Mr. *Firmin's* Quest. I.

“Since God was so gracious to make a Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed, and it did then consist with his Wisdom to constitute his Church of Parents and Children, while the Parents did believe in the Messiah to come; Why may it not consist with his Grace to continue that Covenant, and with his Wisdom still to constitute his Gospel-Church of Parents and Children, the *Jews* now believing in Christ come?”

Answer.

You must allow that the Covenant of Grace was not restrained to *Abraham* and his Seed, but did belong to many at that time both Parents and Children; many holy Patriarchs being then living, and some outlived *Abraham* himself, and yet none of these were concerned in the Covenant of Circumcision, as made with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* but only in the Covenant of Grace as made with *Adam and Noah*, which had now continued more than 2000 years, during all which time no Infant was concerned either in Circumcision or Baptism, and yet were as much of the Church as was needful for their Salvation. And hence a Man may very well answer your Question, by asking you another, Thus:

Since God was so gracious to make a Covenant with *Adam* and *Noah* and their Seed, and it did then consist with his Wisdom to constitute his Church of Parents to practise his Ordinances, and of their Children to partake

†

partake

of the Grace of eternal Life, without being concerned in the Practice of Ordinances in their Infancy, for more than 2000 years before Christ came: Why may it not consist with his Grace to continue that Covenant of Grace made with *Adam*, *Noah* (and *Abraham* himself 24 years before he was circumcised) and with his Wisdom still to constitute his Gospel-Church of Parents to practise his Ordinances, and of their Children to partake of the Grace of eternal Life, without being concerned in the Practice of his Ordinances in their Infancy, since Christ is come; especially considering that Christ himself did not appoint those very Infants who were brought to him, to have his Ordinances imposed upon them?

If Mr. *Firmin* be not satisfied with this Reply, then let me tell him it becomes no Man, no not Mr. *Firmin* himself, to propound such an unlearned Question, which is guilty of no more reason than this: Since God was so gracious, and it did consist with his Wisdom to give *Abraham* a Command to offer up his beloved Son as a Sign of Christ to come; why may it not consist with his Grace and Wisdom, for us of our own Heads without any Command from God, to offer up every one his dearest Child in remembrance that Christ is come?

Sir, What may, or may not consist with the Wisdom of God in relation to his Church-constitution, and our serving him in matters of Religion, must not be concluded from the likeness which we fancy to be between his former Institutions, and our own, or others Inventions; but from such Directions as he has given us by the Messiah, which was to teach us all things, *John 4.* both concerning our selves, and concerning our Infants.

And we do therefore know that it was not consistent with the Wisdom of God to constitute his Gospel-Church, so as to impose Gospel-Ordinances upon Infants (although he did impose Legal Ordinances upon them) because Christ (who is the Wisdom of God) hath revealed no such thing to his Apostles, nor they to us.

And like as ye know it to be inconsistent with the Wisdom of God, to bring little Children so into the Church, as to partake of the Lord's Table, because God hath required Faith and Humiliation in every one that comes to that holy Manducation: So we do know it to be inconsistent with the Wisdom of God to bring Infants so into his Church, as to partake of holy Baptism, because Repentance, whereby Sin is forsaken; and Faith to believe God's Promises, is required by him of those that he requires to be baptized. You see then that we do not deny Infants to be of the Church, in such sort as to obtain Salvation, with them that shall be saved;

saved; although we deny them to be in the Church in your sense. But let us hear your second Question.

Mr. *Firmin's* Quest. II.

“If God hath repealed his Covenant with the believing *Jews* Seed, turned their Children out of the Church, and deny them Baptism, tho’ the *Jews* truly believe in Christ come; what hath God left in the room of these, that carry any shew of his Blessing, or good Will towards their Children during their Infant-state?”

Answer.

The Words *Covenant* and *Church*, as used by Mr. *Firmin*, are ambiguous. I do not find that *Abraham*, nor *Isaac* neither, were out of the Church till they were circumcised. It’s evident *Abraham's* Seed was in Covenant before they were eight days old, even as it was a peculiar visible Church-Covenant, else all that were uncircumcised for forty years in the Wilderness were out of the Church and Covenant.

Mr. *Firmin* himself believes that Infants are in the Covenant, and in the Church also, before they be sprinkled by him. For this is the *Minor* of one of his Arguments, p. 103. But Children of believing Parents are Church-members, and this before you sprinkle them. Now, Sir, if your Doctrine be true; then it is not our waiting for a fit time to baptize our Children, which turns them out of the Church, nor does God for our so doing turn them out of the Church; any whit more than your waiting a fit time, (and you make it perhaps twenty, thirty, or forty years) for your bringing your Children to the Lord’s Table, turns them out of the Church. Indeed if they live to years, and chuse sinful ways, they then turn themselves out of that Relation they had to God and his People in their Infancy, by virtue of God’s gracious Covenant; and they thus turning his Mercy into Judgment, shall perish whether yours or ours. The Case is equal, I need say no more to a wise Man.

Yet I add, That the believing *Jews*, and their Infants also, were now made free from the Jewish Church-state, Gal. 5. 1. But neither they nor their Infants were deprived of any place in the Church, which was needful for them in their respective capacities; yet the Parents had many Duties upon them which the Infants had not, and of these the Baptism of Repentance was one; they had also Priviledges which the Infants had not, of which the Lord’s Table was one. Yet the little Children had these Priviledges which the Children of Unbelievers had not. First to be devoted to God by the Prayers of the Church, warranted therein by the Example of Christ, who when little Children were brought to him for Prayer, did not refuse but perform it, and wills that little Children be

brought

brought to him; and accordingly we do dedicate our Children to him from the Womb, according to our Capacity.

2. Little Children are also by this means (*i. e.* of their Parents Conversion) under the Blessing of an early Education in the Christian Religion; by which means (through God’s Blessing) I have known some who were not sprinkled in Infancy, attain to more true Knowledge of Christianity, and Experience of the Work of Grace (so far as Man may judge) at 7 or 8 years of Age, than multitudes of those who were sprinkled in their Infancy, have attained at the Age of 70 or 80 years.

3. Our gracious God by Jesus Christ hath left us an open Declaration that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to Infants, in which Declaration he has not excepted so much as one of them. This is more than Circumcision, and more clear than any thing before declared concerning Infants, tho’ there was evidence of God’s Love to them before.

From all which you may see, that God hath left us in the room of Circumcision, a far more excellent Testimony of his saving pleasure concerning Infants than that was, or any legal Rite whatsoever.

As for Mr. *Baxter's* Argument which you borrow, ’tis answered in what is said to your Questions. Howbeit, I have more particularly Answered it in my Examination of no less than five hundred Queries, gathered by one of his Admirers out of his voluminous Works; all which have been redargued by a proportionable number of *Anti-Queries*, in which all his Devices for Pædotoratism, is in some measure discovered to be but the cunning craftiness of human subtilty, or a copious Brain. Of whose Books on this Subject, and Dr. *Hammonds* also, take thus the Judgment of a Learned Doctor of the Church of England now living: *I have seen what my learned and worthy Friend Dr. Hammond, Mr. Baxter, and others say in defence of [Infant Baptism]; and must confess I do not a little wonder that Men of so great Parts should say so much to so little purpose; for I have not yet seen any thing like an Argument for it.* Dr. *Barlows* Letter to Mr. *Tombs*.

Thus much in Answer to your Questions. See more in the last Part.

One thing I take special notice of in your Discourse of Infants. You tie up the Salvation of all Infants that shall be saved, to their having Faith some way; yea, you say, *else they must all perish.* p. 90. And you allow Faith to no more Infants than are elected in your sense of Election. The rest of Infants, even of believing Parents, we reprobate and damned, for all the Noise which ye make of their Covenant-Interest, Church-Membership, Holiness, &c.

Miserable Infants! If there be none to plead your cause better than Mr. *Firmin* has done, it's uncertain whether so much as one of you shall be saved out of a thousand.

And whilst his Book may cause many weak Readers to think that Circumcision did, and that Infant-Baptism doth great things toward their Salvation, it's evident he can believe no such thing himself. For if they be *elect*, saved they shall be tho they be not baptised: And for those Infants which are reprobated, damned they must be tho they be baptised.

He is so far from making Baptism of Infants to be of that Concernment which you may imagine from some Passages in him, that he plainly tells you, p. 20. *That he does not think that a sound Believer dying without Baptism shall be damned:* And then how an innocent Infant dying without Baptism should be damned, is not easy to be imagined. But, by his favour, if such a Believer had opportunity to be baptised, and neglected his Baptism, he will hardly pass for a sound Believer in the Day of Judgment; because *in this thing he believed not his Lord, who told him, Thus it becomes us to fulfil all Righteousness, Mat. 3. 15. Deut. 1. 33. Act. 3. 22, 23.* And I must in Faithfulness tell Mr. *Firmin*, that such a sound Believer I take him to be, for after all the Improvement which he tells us he has made of his Fathers Covenant, (which would make a well Man sick even to see what pitiſſful work he makes with it, pag. 68, 69, 70, 71.) for after all his shifting from Post to Pillar, he only gets Stomach to *reject the Counsel of God against himself, being not baptised with the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins*, as some of the Learned have done before him, *Luk. 7. 30.*

And seeing it is the known Practice of Infant-sprinklers to sprinkle them when they are fast asleep, and it is odds but Mr. *Firmin* was asleep when he was sprinkled and crossed, and therein these wonderful things done, which he talks of, without Scripture or Reason to warrant his Conceits I desire to know of him *what Ground any Man hath, his Parents or himself, to baptise any Person when they are asleep?* This is no idle Enquiry, but calls for the Consideration of all serious Christians.

In these and the following Pages you will find this to be Mr. *Firmin's* sense: That the Covenant as it concerns Infants, hath two Parts, the inward, and the outward: That some Infants have the outward Part who are not concern'd in the inward Part, and that the first sort of Infants cannot fall, but the rest may and shall fall, because they have not *seminal* Faith and Regeneration, but only reputative Faith. And yet sure this was not the Infants Fault; for it could not chuse of what Seed it should be produced. And what the Seminal Faith is, I suppose Mr. *Firmin*

may

may know as much as those Infants do whom he supposes to have it. Dr. *Hammond* was a great Man for Infant-sprinkling, yet he rejects this Fable of Mr. *Firmin's*: For he tells us, he must confess that Faith is to necessarily founded in Understanding, *that he which hath not Understanding, cannot have Faith.* And Dr. *Taylor* confesses, whether Infants have Faith, is a Question to be disputed by those who care not how much they affirm, and how little they prove.

This damning all Inta. which have not Faith, I take to be a very damnable Doctrine, because it represents God to be so cruel, as to make millions of Infants on purpose to send them to Hell, who could by no means help to want of Faith. What Man would kill his new-born Child, because it does not call him Father as soon as it is born? And shall mortal Man be more just than God, shall Man be more righteous than his Maker?

I am ashamed of the Doctrine of our *Presbyterians* and *Independents*, which, as I am informed, teach that Infants are yelling in Hell, yea that Infants of a Span long are yelling in Hell.

I am also ashamed of Mr. *Firmin's* Conceit, pag. 90. where from Dr. *Ames* he would have us believe, *that an Infant is as capable of a passive Reception of Christ and Grace, as a Man.* Now if this be true, that Men are no more capable to suffer the Grace of God to act upon their Souls than Infants, I am persuaded they would fare better than they are like to do. For it is certain if Infants receive any thing of Christ or Grace, it is merely by Miracle, as in the case of *John the Baptist*, when he was in the Womb: and hence it must needs follow, that unless God will work a Miracle upon every one at the Beginning of his Conversion, he is excusable; according to this Fancy of Dr. *Ames* and Mr. *Firmin*.

Is not this an Adulterous Generation, who without a Miracle will not admit that any Man can receive Christ more than an Infant, who it's certain cannot receive him without a Miracle?

But let such vain Disputers know, that the Record which God hath given of his Son, concerning his Death and Resurrection, will be sufficient to leave them without excuse if they believe it not: and that it is their Duty (not the Duty of Infants) to receive Christ as made known to them in his Doctrine, which if they believe not, it shall judge them (not Infants) in the last Day.

Some indeed do abuse *Ephes. 1. 19, 20.* to uphold this false Opinion, that none can believe without such a Power as by which Christ was raised from the dead. Whereas it is evident, the Apostle only shews that the Faith of Christians agrees with, or is according to the Power of God,

which he wrought in Christ when he raised him up from the dead, *i. e.* they doubt not at all, but that the same God which had Power to raise up Christ from the dead, has Power to do whatsoever he pleases, and so to raise us up also by his Power, *1 Cor.* 6. 14. *2 Cor.* 4. 14. For the Power by which Christ was raised from the dead, being irresistible, all the Power of Men and Devils cannot resist it. All that have true Faith, do believe that no Power shall be able to withstand God in the Resurrection, but that his People shall be raised from Death to Life, and set with Christ in Glory, maugre the Devil and all his Power.

But the Power of God's Grace by which God works in Men in an ordinary way, is not irresistible; *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, Act.* 7. 51. and 13. 46. Christ marvelled at the Unbelief of the *Jews, Mar.* 6. 6. because they had a sufficiency of means by which to believe, otherwise he could not have marvelled at their Unbelief. But what needs many words? Unbelief shall be the condemning Sin, *John* 3. 18, 19. *Mark* 16. 16. It follows therefore against all Contradiction, that Men perish not for want of an Object of Faith, but because they reject that Object, and neglect that great Salvation which God offers them, *Heb.* 2. 1, 2, 3, otherwise it will follow that all which shall be damned, were created to be damned without any Remedy. And how unlike this is to that God whose tender Mercies are over all his Works, and to that Christ who wept for the Destruction of his Enemies, *Luk.* 19. 41, 42. let all Men of Reason judge, as they would judge in any case where Justice and Mercy must both stand inviolate.

This strange Doctrine of damning the greatest Part of the World, and that before the World was, is so pernicious, that it makes God Author of all Sin for which Damnation is due. For if he have desin'd the greatest Part of the World, Infants and grown Persons, to a damned State, without any Intention of their Salvation, or means to prevent their Destruction, because it was his Pleasure to damn them. He that was thus Author of their End, must also be Author of that which conduces to the end: but far be this from God.

And let it be far from us to think thus hardly of God, that he should be so unmerciful, as to send poor Infants to Hell-torments, who only had time in this World to cry and die, and sometimes too to die before they could cry.

Presumption



Presumption no Proof;

O R

Mr. Petto's Arguments for Infant-Discipleship and Baptism, Considered and Answered.

P A R T, I.

MR. Petto entitles his Book, *Infant-Baptism of Christ's Appointment*, and lays down this Position, *That it is the Will of Christ that some Infants should be baptised*. But why some, and not some? Are Infants so diversified in the Will of Christ, as that he has excepted some of them? It had been fit that the Scripture which excludes some Infants from Baptism, and admits otherwise had been produced. But alas, this is only Man's Invention, and none of Christ's Distinction: they are equally precious in his Sight, yet he requires none of them to be baptised.

Two things you premise before you set down your Arguments.

1. You complain that some call for plain Scripture for *Infant-baptism*, and speak slightly of Scripture Consequences. But this is your Mistake: if they be Scripture Consequences rightly deduced (as you seem to allow they must be such) then you have no Adversary. But perhaps you are displeas'd that your Consequences are not taken for such as our Saviour's was, for you quote *Mat.* 22. 31, 32. but his Deductions are unquestionable, yours are not, and why may not our Consequences be equally valuable with yours?

2. You are pleas'd to tell us, *There is no express Scripture against Infant-baptism, therefore Infants may be baptised*. And this Argument is sufficiently answered, by saying,

There

There is no express Scripture for Infant-baptism, therefore Infant-baptism may be omitted. If you fly to Consequences for it, 'tis odds but we shall find as good Consequences against it.

But I will deny the Consequence of your Argument, and answer it by an Author of your own, who writes thus:

All things in God's Worship must have a Warrant out of God's Word; must be commanded. It's not enough that it's not forbidden or what hurt is there in it? but it must be commanded. When any Creature is raised in a religious way above the rest, it hath by Nature, if I have not Scripture to warrant me, I am to be suspicious.——We must be willing Worshippers, we must not be will-Worshippers.——You see how severe God was to Nadab and Abihu, but for taking other Fire than that which God appointed, tho there was no direct Command against it.——In matters of Worship God stands upon little things.——For there is nothing wherein the Prerogative of God does more appear than in Worship. Thus he. To which we add Tertullian's Rule: If it be said, it is lawful, because the Scripture doth not forbid it: it may equally be retorted, it is therefore not lawful, because the Scripture doth not command it.

And truly by your Argument (as of all that's brought it is the best) you will never be able to withstand any Innovation, which is not expressly forbidden in Scripture. And then why do you disgust the Common-Prayer, with the Rites and Ceremonies there required, which are not expressly forbidden, more than your sprinkling Infants? Nay, the Church of Rome will by this Argument stand on equal Terms with you, for many of her Ceremonies which you disallow; For admit one Error, and a thousand will follow. Thus, by your Argument, Men may run they know not whither, and return they know not when. I now come to your two main Arguments, for this you seem not much to rest upon; but you use it *ad hominem*.

Mr. Petto's first Argument for Infant-Discipleship.

Some Infants are so discipled, as to have the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Spirit upon them. Therefore by the Will of Christ they are to be baptis'd.

Answer. This Argument supposes that some Infants have the Name of Father, Son, and Spirit upon them before they be baptis'd. This I take to be the newest Piece of Doctrine in the World, and therefore must needs enquire what Infants these are? How Mr. Petto knows them from others? And at what time before their Baptism, and also by whom this Name is put upon them, and in what manner it is done? For all these things he ought

ought to know, before (according to his own Logick) he may baptise them.

Till he do this (and he must do it well too) I deny his Antecedent: Saying also, that no Infants are discipled at all, much less so as to have the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon them. My Reasons are such as these.

1. God hath not made this distinction in Gospel-times between some Infants and other some, so as to disciple some of them, by putting the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon them. He has taken down the Wall of distinction between *Jew* and *Gentile*, accounting the one as clean as the other, *Act. 10. 28.* And has given the same Order for discipling to all Nations, *Matth. 28. 19.* but not a word in that Order to put his Name, *of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* upon any Person before they be baptis'd.

2. No Man has Authority by the Word of God to make Infants Disciples at all, much less by putting the Name of *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* upon them before Baptism. But the only Way assign'd by God to make Disciples, is, first, by preaching the Gospel to them, *Mark 16. 15. Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, which shews the true Intent of our Saviour in the Verb, *μαρτυροῦσατε*, to which you refer us: And our Criticks do allow that it signifies an actual teaching both in the Hebrew and Greek. But the best Interpreter of that Verb, is the Practice of our Saviour and his Apostles, who made Disciples by actual teaching, *John 4. 1. μαρτύροις ποιῶν*, plainly evincing the Truth of this.

3. If it could be proved that the Name of the *Trinity* were upon the Infants of Christians; yet this would not bear your Conclusion, that they must be baptis'd, any more than it will bear *Augustin's* Conclusion, that they ought to partake of the Lord's Table. Dr. *Jer. Taylor*, and Dr. *Barlow* confess you may do both as well as either, and that the Wit of Man cannot shew a difference in the Sanctions. And indeed all your Arguments for Infants Church-Membership and Baptism (if they were good) might be improv'd against you concerning the other Ordinance; for admit one Error, and another will follow. But let us examine your Scriptures by which you would prove your Antecedent.

1. You bring *Matth. 28. 19. μαρτυροῦσατε*, Disciple ye all Nations. Now if these Words did oblige the Apostles to put the Name of *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* upon all Persons or Nations before Baptism, it quite spoils your Argument, which would restrain it to some Infants only. Why do you thus abuse the Word? Did the Apostles put the Name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* upon any one Infant? Is not the Scripture silent as to this? Or did they put the Name &c. upon any to whom they preached.

preached, till they received their Doctrine? Or did they do this before they baptised them? In that solemn Institution they did put the Name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon all such as gladly received the Word, Act. 2. 40. Act. 10. ult.* And for this they had full Authority, *Math. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15, 16.* even to preach to, and so to disciple all Nations, baptising them, viz. *Matheras subintelligitur in verbum Matherusate*, as the Practice of Christ had directed them. *John 4. 1. Jesus made and baptised more Disciples than John.* And Junius and Tremelius adds the Particle *Et: Ite ergo, docete omnes populos, & baptisate eos, &c.*

2. You tell us, they are Disciples, not only who actually learn, but who are in the School of Christ his Church in order to their future Learning. This is not true: 1. Infants are not in the School or Church of Christ, as it is a School to learn any thing whilst they are Infants. God has neither bound his Ministers to teach them whilst such, nor enabled them to learn as such. If you say this future teaching respects not the time of their Infancy; then were you very fallacious in your Argument: for this will prove all the Infants in the World to be Disciples, as well as any of them, seeing Christ's Church is the Light of the World, and all that come to Years of Discretion, having opportunity, are bound to learn of her. 2. But yet it does not follow that all who are under present means of Instruction, are therefore to be accounted Disciples. For you know many heard Christ preach, who yet were none of his Disciples, but his Persecutors; many heard his Apostles teach, who yet were not their Disciples, for they put the Word of God from them, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal Life. I suppose also that all that hear Mr. Petto are not his Disciples, how much less poor Infants that never heard him at all. And here I require Mr. P. to name one Infant that he ever made a Disciple according to *Math. 28.* and that will do more a great deal than his empty Dictates.

3. You bring *Act. 8. 3. and 9. 1.* which shews how Saul made havock of the Churches, entring into every House, haling Men and Women to Prison, and that he breathed out Slaughter against the Disciples. Sure you may blush to bring such Texts to prove Infants Disciples; nor will *Act. 15. 10.* bear your Inference. The false Apostles would indeed have had the Disciples among the Gentiles to have been circumcis'd: but it does not follow at all, that every one were Disciples whom they would have circumcis'd. This is just such a Consequence as this; You would have Infants to be sprinkled: Ergo, all are Infants whom ye would have sprinkled. This Consequence you will deny, because you would have others also sprinkled who are no Infants. And for the same reason I deny your

Confe-

Consequence, for the false Apostles would have circumcis'd some who were no Disciples, to wit, Infants.

You bring here *Gen. 17.* (but this we will consider anon) and *Act. 21. 4, 5.* This Place intorms us, That the Disciples told Paul by the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem. Is it possible that * Infants who are not mentioned here, should be of the number of these Disciples. It is true, 'tis said that the Wives and Children went with Paul to the Sea-shore, and kneeled down and prayed. But are all Children Infants? Or, if there were any Infants, did they kneel down upon the Sea-shore and pray with Paul? And if not, to what purpose has he brought these Scriptures?

Tenors signifies Offspring of Growth or Statute, but Beep signifies an Infant.

4. He brings a Cloud of other Scriptures in Figures, for had he read them his Folly would have been seen with more ease. Let us hear what these Scriptures say; *1 Pet. 1. 15. As he which hath called us is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation. Heb. 7. 26. For such an high Priest became us who is holy:* What must these Places prove? I will let down your own Words: *As to the Name of the Trinity, that of being holy is attributed often to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And this very Name of the Lord [holy] he hath imposed upon the Children of Believers.* But what a wretched Consequence is here? as if it would follow that all for whom Christ offered up himself, or for whom he was God's High-Priest, has thereupon the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit on them? Why according to this Logick Saul had the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon him, when he persecuted all that called on that Name. And the Scripture is very plain, *that whilst we were Enemies, Christ died for us:* but we had not then the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit imposed on us. And how follows it, that because Christians are exhorted to be holy in all manner of Conversation, that therefore Infants are discipled, so as to have the Name of *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon them.* Might not a Man by this kind of reasoning prove that all the Infants in the World have the Name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon them:* I am sure that God is the God of the Spirits of all Fleh, and that all Nations are in respect of his gracious Providence, his People, and Sheep of his Pasture, and exhorted to enter into his Ways with Praise and Thanksgiving, *Psal. 100.*

The Places you bring from the *Epistle to the Ephesians, cap. 1. 13. and 4. 30.* informs us that *after Men believed, they were sealed with the Holy Spirit;* this shews these Persons were no Infants. *Rom. 11. 16.* shews that an holy Root has holy Branches; *1 Pet. 2. 9.* tells us *Christians are a chosen Generation, a royal Priest-hood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People,*

C

ple,

ple, that you should shew forth the Praises of him that hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light. As for Rom. 11. 16. it evidently refers to the great things which God will do when he calls the Jews, which were cast off, and so it little concerns our Question; otherwise it were easy to shew that at that time, how holy soever Abraham had been, yet his Children were prophane enough. But Mr. Petto's Drift is to make Men believe that each of them (whom he calls Believers) are as holy a Root in respect of conferring Church-Priviledges, as Abraham was, and so their Children must needs be holy for Baptism. But this is a very unlawful Consequence; seeing Abraham never did, nor ever can confer that Holiness upon so much as one of his Offspring, which shall entitle them to Baptism; because every particular Person's Repentance and Faith is required as the true Antecedents to Baptism, as is granted by the Church of England in her Catechism. But how well she keeps to her Doctrine therein, admits of consideration.

Upon 1 Cor. 7. 14. you teach, that Infants are holy by separation to God and his Service. But, Sir, can you tell us what Service of God Infants are fit for? If other Men may judg as well as you, then as they are not able to serve God in spiritual things, so God requires it not of them whilst Infants. But so strangely are you transported here; that you tell us from Mr. Cotton, That Sin it self is sanctified to Believers. This is another Strain of new Doctrine; and will it not follow from your Doctrine that Sin hath the Name of Father, Son, and holy Spirit upon it? Let Mr. Cotton look to it: You must have a care how you take up such Notions.

You will by no means admit the Holiness here mentioned to be meant of a Matrimonial or Legitimate Holiness. And yet I pray what Sanctification of the Unbeliever can that be but Matrimonial, so as the believing Husband and the unbelieving Wife might cohabit together as Husband and Wife without Sin? The Childrens Holiness is derived from this Sanctification of the Unbeliever, (as the Word *ipse*, being rightly referred, does shew it doth.) This Holiness therefore in true Construction of the place is most fitly interpreted (as Erasmus doth expound it) of Legitimacy, and so did the eminent Man Augustine of Hippo (long before Erasmus) take the sense; for he tells us, *whatssoever that Holiness is, it is certain it is not of Power to make Christians, or remit Sins.*

5. The Figures which you give us out of the Old Testament, are Lev. 19. 2. and 20. 7. Exod. 16. 6. Dent. 7. 6. and 14. 2. and 26. 19. and 28. 9. All which do shew, That God was the Lord; that Israel should know that he is the Lord; that he is a holy God; and that they should be

a holy People. But what is all this to your purpose? God spake not these things to Infants; he tells us so himself: Dent. 11. 2. *And know you this day: for I speak not with your Children, which have not known, and which have not seen the Chastisement of the Lord your God, his Greatness, his mighty Hand, and stretch'd out Arm, &c.* ver. 7. *but your Eyes have seen, &c.*—Therefore ye shall keep all the Commandments, &c. Sure you have not proved your Argument by any thing you have yet brought for that purpose. For,

By all that you have said, it appears not, that some Infants are so disciplined, as to have the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon them. Nor are you able to name so much as one such Infant now in being, and consequently you can with no shew of Reason baptise them. I consider again: Who must do this previous Work to Infant-Baptism? Must the same Minister do both? And what Order have you to put the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost upon Infants twice, once before you sprinkle them, and then again when you sprinkle them?

There is one thing remarkable from your self and others in these later times, who espouse this Controversy. You all seem to be convinced that none are to be baptised but Disciples, according to *Math. 28. 19.* and indeed the Text is so very clear to that purpose, that it cannot be denied. But when I behold the miserable Shifts you are put to, to prove Infants Disciples according to Christ's Commission, *Math. 28. 19.* I do with the greatest Admiration bewail your Unhappiness; and cannot tell how to imagine that any wise Men among you does really believe your selves in what you say on that account. And sure I am the Papists have as strong a pretence from *Hoc est Corpus meum*, for their Transubstantiation, as you have from *Matheteusate* for Infant-Disciplehip.

And to speak freely, they are both incredible things; all Sense and Experience militates equally against both Opinions. If they be Truths, it must be because they are both Miracles: but then they want the Character of true Miracles; for they are no ways demonstrable that there is any Miracle at all in either of them; we are only told that they are so, *i. e.* that the Bread in the Eucharist is Real Flesh; That the Child in your Rantism is born again of Water and Spirit, made a Disciple of Christ, &c. but no mortal Man knows any of these things to be true. And what is it that we may not believe, if we must believe such things as these? Prayer for the Dead, Purgatory fire, &c. will come upon us armed with our own Arguments, if we admit the former.

And to conclude; as to your first Argument, Give me leave to say, if your Hearers can receive your Dictates, and ill-prov'd Affirmations, I

know not but they may believe you in whatsoever you will be pleased to tell them.

What you say of the Antiquity of Infant-Baptism, I shall here consider in few words; for since you insist only upon *Cyprian's* Testimony, whose Grounds for Infant-Baptism you confess to be unsound; I need say little here, that which was built upon bad Principles then by him, and stands upon as unsound ones now by you, does gain nothing by either of you. But will you know that it is plainly granted by some of the most Learned of your way; *That there is neither Precept nor Practice in Scripture for Infant-Baptism [Here it wants the best Antiquity], nor any just Evidence for it for about two hundred Years after Christ.—Yet it came in upon a gross Mistake of the Scripture: that in what Mr. Baxter and Dr. Hammond has said for it, there is nothing that looks like an Argument. Dr. Barlow.* This is enough at present.

PART. II.

Wherein is considered Mr. Petto's second Argument, which he delivers in these Words;

If some Infants be visibly or externally in the Covenant which God made with Abraham, then by the Will of Christ they are to be baptized.

But some Infants are visibly or externally in the Covenant which God made with Abraham:

Therefore by the Will of Christ they are to be baptized.

BEFORE I answer this Argument, I shall consider a few things: And,
1. That (as Mr. Petto grants) God made the Covenant of Grace with *Abraham*, twenty four years before he gave him the Covenant of Circumcision, see *Gen. 12. 1, 2, 3, 4.* with *17. 24.* so that the Covenant of Grace had no external Sign, as it was made with *Abraham*, *Gen. 12.* But when God was pleased to add to this Covenant the Promise of the Land of *Canaan*, &c. then it was that he gave him the Law of Circumcision: and these additional Parts I take to be most properly,

if

if not only that which is the Covenant of Circumcision.

2. It is to be understood that *Abraham* was not the only Person in the World, which was under the Covenant of Grace at this time, when God made Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* 'Tis observed by some that *Salab* lived after the Covenant of Circumcision was made about 50 years. *Arphaxad* lived thirteen years after; and that *Heber* lived till *Jacob* was about twenty years old, which was long after *Abraham* died. Now these with *Melchisedeck* (if he were not one of these) with many others (amongst whom was just *Lot*) were not only true Worshipers of God, according to the Covenant of Grace, but some of them superior to *Abraham* himself, for *Melchisedeck* blessed *Abraham*, being the King of *Salem*, and Priest of the most high God.

3. And as neither these nor their Posterity were liable to any loss of the Covenant of Grace, by their not being circumcised after the manner of *Abraham*; so neither *Job*, nor other worthy Men that were not of the Seed of *Abraham* according to the Flesh, had any obligation to Circumcision: from whence it must needs follow that God intended not the sign of Circumcision to belong to Persons as they were in the Covenant of Grace, but that it was appropriate for some great Ends, respecting a special preservation to the Family of *Abraham*, as of the Kindred from whom Christ should proceed, and with whom he would presence himself, in a Land of Promise, by a distinct way of Worship from all Nations, who at that time were falling very fast into Idolatry.

4. And besides this, it is certain that this Sign of Circumcision, was by God's Appointment to be affixed to some to whom the Covenant of Grace might seem to have the least extent (or at least they did forfeit all Interest in it) this was the case of *Ishmael* and *Esau*, who proved very wicked: and it is to be questioned whether the Bondmen or Slaves in *Israel* had that Ceremony as a Badge of the Covenant of Grace. Men may talk high of these things and prove little, or whether Circumcision was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith to any Person in the World save to *Abraham*: And in what sense it was so to him (who had so many things peculiar to him) is not easy to be demonstrated.

5. Our Practice in Religious Institutes is not to be gathered from such uncertain Conjectures, but to stand upon the clear Direction of the Instituter, or the Practice of such as God hath thought fit to make Precedents to us; and it is certain we are not at all concerned in the Law of Circumcision, and for us to take our Rules thence for the Subjects of Baptism, is very childish and reflects Dishonour upon Christ and his Apostles, who never sent us to learn Infant-Baptism from Infant-Circumcision, nor indeed

deed have they taught it at all. These things premised I answer to the Argument by these ensuing Distinctions.

1. If by Covenant Mr. P. means the Covenant of Circumcision (as he does, for he quotes *Gen. 7. 9, 10, 11.* to prove his Assumption), and by some Infants he means the Infants of Christians as such, as that is his meaning; then I deny his *Minor*.

2. Or, if by Covenant, he mean that Covenant of Grace, *Gen. 12.* distinct from the Covenant of Circumcision; and by some Infants being in this Covenant externally, he means Infants are concerned in the outward Profession or Practice of Worship; still I deny the *Minor*: for God by that Covenant of Grace, *Gen. 12.* never required the Performance of such Duties of Infants.

3. If by Covenant, he mean the gracious Pardon of Original Sin to some Infants only, or the Salvation of their Souls dying such; and by some Infants he means that some few of them only are vitibly in that Estate, and all the rest in a visible State of Damnation to Hell Torments; still I deny his *Minor*. For God has not said (and therefore Man ought not to say it) that so much as one poor Infant shall be damned; but he is so far from that, that he has no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but rather that they turn and live; and hath assured us that the Son should not bear the Iniquity of the Father, which can only be true in respect of Damnation, for all Infants do bear the Sin of their Father *Adam*, and sometimes in temporal Punishments they bear the Sin of their immediate Parents.

4. If his Arguments were so good natured, as to allow Infants indefinitely to be in a visible State of Salvation, (*viz.* a declared Right to the Kingdom of Heaven, as their dear Saviour hath testified they have) yet I would deny the Consequence of his *Major*, because the Covenant of Grace, considered as abstracted from the Covenant of Circumcision, never required the Application of any Ceremony to Infants as a Pledge of it, either before the Law, or as it is now established by our Saviour in the Gospel Oeconomy; so that his Conclusion is far from Truth, which tells the World that *by the Will of Christ some Infants are to be baptized.* Now let us examine his Proof.

1. He begins *pag. 7.* with *Gen. 17.* which speaks not one word of Baptism; and himself tells us in the next Page, That *the Covenant in Gospel-times cannot be kept by Circumcision*; for that, saith he, *is abrogated, and ceased to be the Token of it*; so that *Gen. 17.* can be no Proof for his *Minor*. But he quotes *Act. 2. 38, 39.* and *Heb. 10. 16, 17.* And this (he says) *is a full Command to baptize all in Covenant now.*

†

But

But for Answer, consider that no more are commanded in this place to be baptized, than are first commanded to repent; nor no more were baptized, than gladly received the Word. And the Promise is expressly of the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon all Parents and Children, *as God shall call them*: But no Command nor Promise respecting Baptism, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost, before the Lord shall call them, whether Parents or Children. Again, these Words, *καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν, to you and to your Children*, is not applicable to Children in Infancy, but to a Succession or Posterity qualified for the things required and promised.

That Text he brings out of *Heb. 10.* tells us, That *God will write his Laws in the Minds, and put them in the inner Part of his People under the new Covenant, and that he will remember their Iniquities no more.* This is not meant of Infants, who as they have no Iniquities for God to remember, but only original Sin for him to pardon, as to the condemning Nature of it, so he never did remember their Iniquities. Nor need they any Laws to be written in their Hearts during Infancy, for they can understand none, and God speaks not with them about the Observation of his Laws, as he tells us *Deut. 11. 2.*

The second Commandment is brought to prove Infant-Baptism, but Mr. P. should know it does not command any particular Form of Worship at all. Only this is true what God has elsewhere instituted, and never repealed, the second Commandment may serve to enforce the Performance of such things. But here he begs the Principle which he cannot prove, no not by *Gen. 17.* Let us hear the most Learned of his way (I mean in point of Infant-sprinkling) speak their Judgments, and these be their Words. * *That Promise Gen. 17. 7. concerns literally peculiar Protection, and worldly Felicity, not the Remission of Sins and everlasting Life.* And another tells us, *to argue from Circumcision to Infant-Baptism is a cunning Argument, by which it will follow that Females are not to be baptized.*

* Manual of Contro. p. 372, to 377. S. n. Antid.

Mr. P. tells us there *is no Warrant to delay the Application of Baptism*; And I grant it. But then he should consider that where there is no Authority nor Capacity to dispense Baptism, there is no delay. And this is the case of Infants: Nor does their being under the merciful Covenant of Salvation by Christ, oblige them to Duty in Infancy, because they can perform none. And therefore your arguing from *Fœderati* to their being *signati*, is better Rhyme than Reason; for if you follow that Consequence, it will unavoidably bring Infants to the Lord's Table, where you

you will not be pleased with them. And pray consider what Multitudes were *federati* before, and in, and after *Abraham's* time, who yet in your own Judgment were not *signati*; such were the Patriarchs before-mentioned, and those under their Conduct; such were the thousands of Males who died before the eighth day in *Israel*. Such were all the Females, who alone were one half of *Abraham's* Seed; all these were *federati*, yet were none of them *signati*.

What you are pleased here to add of *some that can, and some that cannot fall away*. As it's impertinent, so I think it far better for Men to cease such idle Disputes, and to exhort one another daily to take heed that they do not fall away.

For my part I am far from thinking that any Man can stand by his own Strength, or do any thing in Religion as he ought without the Help of God: I likewise grant that God does much more for some, than he does for all Men. Yet all this gives us no occasion or Authority to tell any Person in the World, that it is impossible for him to fall, so as to perish. And if we may not tell another Man this confident Story, it's bad venturing to tell our selves that we cannot fall so.

I think it's only proper to say of God, *He cannot lie*, and then it follows, *all Men may lie*; and this Lie may be their Ruin for ought they know; *Rev. 21. 27*.

I will not dispute whether there be a State attainable in this World, in which Men shall certainly be saved, I doubt it not: but when Men have got to that degree, is so hard to be demonstrated, that I take him for no wise Man, that will affirm it of himself, or any other in particular.

It remains therefore the best way in the World to do as *Paul* did, *1 Cor. 9. 27. Beat down the Body, and bring it into Subjection, lest while we preach to others, we become Cast-aways*. And if any confident Gentleman shall here tell me the Word only intends reprobable, I'll make bold to tell him, he does neither understand the Greek, nor his own Heart much better than I do, and that is not very perfectly, I will assure him.

I have done with *Mr. Petto's* two main Arguments, we will now consider his Auxiliaries.

Mr. Petto's

†

Mr. Petto's third Argument, pag. 39.

Some Infants are visibly Christ's, and so are Abraham's Seed; and hence he would infer their Baptism. He has many Words, and very often repeated, the substance of all has I think already been answered; however seeing he talks here of a threefold Seed of *Abraham*, under the Titles of *Natural, Spiritual, and Ecclesiastical Seed*, I will seriously consider the Scriptures which he brings to prove Infants to be the *Ecclesiastical Seed* of *Abraham*. For the Scriptures which he brings to describe the *Spiritual Seed* of *Abraham*, speaks not one word of Infants. *Gal. 3. 8, 9.* shews that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, and concludes thus; So then they which be of Faith, are blessed with faithful *Abraham*. This is not spoken of Infants, yet they shall be blessed.

The Texts he brings to prove Infants to be the *Ecclesiastical Seed* of *Abraham*, are many. first, *Matth. 25. 1, 2.* where the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to wise and foolish Virgins: but I suppose no wise Man takes Infants to be of either sort, for they are neither wise nor foolish, but they are innocent.

Two Texts more we have, *Rom. 11. 20. John 15. 6.* where we learn that the Jews were broken off for Unbelief, and the Gentiles stood by Faith; that some Branches in Christ not bearing Fruit are taken away, and those which bear Fruit are purged to bring forth more Fruit: But what all this is to Infants no Man can tell.

He quotes these over again, and with them *Matth. 19. 14. Mark 10. 13, 14. Luke 18. 15. Matth. 16. 18. Rom. 16. 16. 1 Cor. 12. 27. Rev. 1. 12, 13, 20.* Now he that from these Texts would prove Infants to be *Abraham's Ecclesiastical Seed*, must prove that in the three first Texts, the Word Kingdom must needs signify the Church-militant, and that Christ admitted these Infants into the Church by Baptism, or else that they have Authority to do more than Christ himself did: For if these very Infants were not baptised, they must have very great Contidance that can pretend from hence to find ground to baptise others.

The next Christ tells *Peter*, that he would build his Church upon a Rock, But must all that are saved be *Abraham's Ecclesiastical Seed*? Sure some Infants may be saved who were never baptised for all this. *Rom. 16. 16.* bids Christians salute one another with an holy Kiss, and tells them also that the Church of Christ salutes them. I see nothing from hence to prove *Infants visibly Christ's, so as to be Abraham's Seed*; sure his Proposition will fail of Proof.

D

The

The Apostle, 1 Cor. 12. 27. tells the Corinthians that *they were the Body of Christ, and Members in particular*. But not one word to prove that there was one Infant of this Communion. Yet all Members of that one Body were partakers of that one Bread, in which their Unity was demonstrated, Rev. 1. 12, 13, 14. only describes the Vision that *John* saw of the Son of God, and the seven Golden Candlesticks. But no Man can yet find in any of these Candlesticks so much as one Infant concern'd bearing up the light of Truth in the profession of the Gospel.

Now for his Argument, I would know the meaning of this Speech, *Some Infants are visibly Christ's*. If he means some Infants only are Christ's by Redemption; how can he possibly know the Redeemed from the Damned? (for so they are supposed to be in this Man's destiny.) The work of Redemption is visible, because God's Word tells us who Christ died for, and that is *for every Man*, Heb. 2. 9. and here Infants are equally Christ's visibly.

But so long as Mr. Petto thinks that Christ died but for some Infants only, (and those very few in comparison of the whole, he cannot name one for whom Christ died, it being impossible) for them to give any Demonstration by which he may know such a thing, and therefore he can have but small comfort in baptizing any of them, if indeed it were lawful to baptize some Infants, as he supposes. Nay, were he as sure that Christ died for some particular Infants, as I am that he died for them all, yet would it not follow that they are *Abraham's Ecclesiastical Seed*, so as to be baptized: for Christ knew that the Infants whom he took in his Arms were his, and yet he did no such thing to them; and I shall never think Mr. P. wiser than our Saviour, nor so kind to poor Infants as he was.

Mr. Petto argues thus: *Some Infants are visibly of the Faith, and so are Abraham's Seed*. Here I deny the Antecedent. I say no Infants are visibly of the Faith. And Mr. P. tells me in this very place, *That he does not say that Faith seminal, and habitual, or actual, is in all Infants baptized; for then (saith he) all of them must be saved, which they are not; or else they might lose that special Faith: But they are invisibly invested in the Covenant or Promise, which is the Word of Faith, and may bear that Name, &c.* I answer:

Here are two kinds of Faith which the Scripture knows nothing of, i. e. *seminal*, and *habitual*. However I perceive he knows not one Infant that has any of these kinds of Faith, he therefore has found out a fourth, and that is a reputative Faith, or a thing which he says *may bear that name*.

name. Sure these are meer Dreams and Fancies, and so let them go.

Actual Faith Infants have none; and this is all the Faith that Man can make Judgment of by God's Word. He does indeed grant all Infants which are baptized have not this Faith; and if he dare affirm it of any of them, all the Experience of the World will confute him, and so he has lost his Argument, as a meer Story without Truth, and against all Experience. For seeing Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God; he cannot without a Miracle shew *any Infant to be visibly in the Faith*; for the poor Babe knows not its right hand from its left. He might as well say some Infants are visibly in Repentance, and I marvel why the *Pædobaptists* do not insist upon that, as well as Faith, to entitle their Children to Baptism.

Mr. Petto tells us, *If Infants have not Faith for the present, yet visibly they are under a Promise of it, which Promise Baptism may be a Sign and Seal of; it may seal a Doctrine of Faith, even where a Principle of it is yet wanting*. These and what follows, are meer Dictates and Presumptions, without Proof. Yet he brings *Deut. 30. 6.* where God promises to *circumcise the hearts of the Israelites, and the heart of their Seed, to love the Lord with all the heart, and with all the soul*. But God spake not this to Infants, nor as a thing to be done to them in their Infancy; for when they should thus be circumcis'd, they should be able to know the Lord very well, for they should love him then with all the Heart and Soul. Now this Promise is made to all Men upon future Contingencies, for God commandeth all Men every where to repent, and wills that the Gospel (which contains this and many other precious Promises) should be preached to every Creature; And if *Baptism may be a Seal of this Doctrine, even there where there wants a Principle of Faith*, as you tell us it may; then we may go and baptize every Creature, and not higgel as you do about some Infants only: but should we do thus, God's Word would trip up our Heels, as it does yours, for tho he has proclaim'd Peace to the World by the Gospel, yet he makes Faith necessary to the Pledg of its Reception; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; If thou believest with all thine Heart thou mayst be baptized; When they believed, they were baptized*, not one Person admitted without; and then what is Mr. Petto that will adventure to *give Baptism, even there where there is not Faith, no nor so much as a Principle of it?* How shall Baptism be the Answer of a good Conscience without a Principle of Faith? And what good will it do you without Faith?

He quotes *Isa. 44. 3.* *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, &c.* Well, but not in Infancy; when was this done to any of your Infants? Or, has not God made good this Promise in the Gospel? Men must be thirsty before this Water be poured out upon them. You bring *Isa. 59. 21.* which might have shewed you that these Promises belong not to Infants; seeing they cannot understand either the Word or Spirit, which yet is here promised to be in the *mouth of the Church, and her Seed for ever*; or, if you please, in the *mouth of Christ, and his Seeds Seed for ever.* But Infants are so called, saith *Augustin, à non fando*, because they cannot speak.

You bring *Psal. 25. 13.* and *112. 2.* where 'tis said, *The Seed of good Men shall inherit the Earth, and be mighty upon Earth, and be blessed.* But I think these are unfitly applied to Infants in Infancy; and yet if they concern'd them, here's no Proof that they are vitally in the Faith during Infancy.

But what shall become of the Infants of ill Men by Mr. Petto's Doctrine? they are put by him in a Condition contrary to that of the Infants of good Men, as if the Infants Bleeding or Curling must be measured out, as the Parents are Believers, or otherwise. Let us see his Scriptures; *Psal. 37. 28.*—*The Seed of the wicked shall be cut off:* But why must this be applied to Infants? Sure he has Mercy for them, so as not to turn them into Hell. For he hath told us, if those Children of wicked Men which live to years do but turn from the wicked Ways of their Fathers, they shall not dy; and so equal are God's Ways, that if the Son of a righteous Man follow the Ways of wicked Men, he shall die: as to temporal Judgments, I grant the Infants do sometimes suffer for the Sin of their Parents, but our Discourse is about their Salvation.

You bring *Rom. 11.* again, and thence you infer that the Infant-Seed of the Jews was broken off for the Parents Unbelief. But if this Breaking-off be understood of an Exclusion of Infants to Hells Torments, it is a most false Opinion, as I shall fully shew anon.

That *Abraham* by virtue of his Faith which he had being uncircumcised, is a Father of the faithful, both *Jew* and *Gentile*, is very true. But that any of them are his Children, so as to be Members of the Church militant, to do and suffer for Christ, without actual Faith, is not true; nor does *Rom. 4. 10, 11, 12.* prove the contrary; let us hear your Text: *How then was it reckoned? when he was in Circumcision, or in Uncircumcision? not in Circumcision, but in Uncircumcision. And he received the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith,* which

which he had being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that Righteousness might be imputed to them also. And the Father of Circumcision to them, who are not of the Circumcision only, but also walk in the Steps of that Faith of our Father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. May the God of Heaven give you a good understanding of this Place, and then all your struggling for Infant-Baptism would soon vanish.

For there is nothing more evident than this, that none but such as so believe, as to walk in the Steps of that Faith which *Abraham* himself had (which was true actual Faith,) are the Children of *Abraham*, in a visible Church-state to worship God, either in Baptism, or other Ordinances.

From *pag. 48.* You proceed to answer many Objections, and in all you say this seems to be your great Stick, That Infant-Interest in the Covenant, *Gen. 17.* is not cut off by any thing so objected, as you have set them down; and unless this be shewed, all Objections signify nothing to you.

1. To which I answer, Infants had as good Right to the Covenant of Grace before Circumcision, and have the same Right now which they ever had to that blessed Covenant: of this more by and by.

2. No Person's Right to Circumcision did arise out of the Covenant of Grace, but did only issue from the Command of God; otherwise all good Men then living must needs be circumcised, for they were in the Covenant of Grace as well as *Abraham.*

3. As Circumcision did not give *Abraham's* Seed an Interest in the Covenant of Grace, so the Abrogation of Circumcision did not take that Interest from them. Nor did the omission of it, when in being, cut Infants off from the Covenant of Grace: It only cut them off from the Land of *Canaan*, and the external Privileges of the Jewish Church-state. For the delay of the Circumcision of *Moses's* Child did not cut it off from the Covenant of Grace, nor did the omission of it forty Years in the Wilderness, cut them Infants off from the Covenant of Grace who died in that time, howbeit before they possessed the Land of *Canaan* they must be circumcised; which evidently shews that the Covenant of Grace, and the Covenant of Circumcision are to be distinguished. And therefore though Infants have now no Part in the Covenant of Circumcision, yet they lose nothing by it; because though it was very useful till Christ came, for the Ends for which it was ordained, respecting the Church-state of the Jews, and the Birth of our Saviour, of that Seed

according to the Flesh; yet the Removal of it was a great Mercy, whether we respect the Severity of the Service it self, or the Obligation to which it bound all that were circumcised.

Neither does any Man's Right to the Covenant of Grace arise from the Covenant of Circumcision; neither does his Right to Baptism arise from the Covenant of Grace, without a Divine Command appointing to whom, and how it should be performed. Now the Gospel being preached for the Obedience of Faith to all Nations, Rom. 16. 26. And that Typical Covenant of Circumcision being made void, and the Gospel appointing no Ceremony for Infants (yet assuring them of Heaven) but making Repentance and Faith the two first Principles of the Christian Religion, and Baptism the third Principle in order to a due Profession of Gospel-worship in a Church-way, it is manifest that Infant-baptism is an Innovation, and makes a Breach upon the sacred Doctrine contained in St. Paul's Catechism, as set down, Heb. 6. 1, 2. And therefore all good Men should labour that Truth herein according to Primitive Order may be restored.

Nevertheless that Infants (even all of them dying such) have an undeniable Right in the Covenant of Grace, to Life and Salvation, I hope to make very evident both from the Scripture and right Reason, in the last Part of this Treatise to which I now apply my self; and though herein I shall not directly answer to Mr. Petto, yet I shall scarce fail to remove those things, which may seem to be of any moment, in his often and unnecessary Repetitions.

P A R T. III.

In which Infants Interest in the Covenant of Grace, without Baptism, is asserted and maintained.

IT is evident from the Writings of many *Padobaptists*, both Papists and Protestants, that they do hold either absolutely, that no unbaptized Infant can be saved, or at least that their Salvation is very doubtful, and amongst those, Mr. Baxter, and from him Mr. Barret, and now Mr. Petto has not a little amused the Minds of Men about this matter.

First,

First, Mr. Baxter tells us (and Mr. Barret also) that Infants are not so much as seemingly in a State of Salvation without Baptism. And secondly, Mr. Petto thinks they are cut out of the great Charter of Heaven. These are his Words: *It is the Covenant-Interest and Baptism of the Infant-Seed, only of visible Believers, that I plead for; and there are such vast Numbers (even millions) of these, that if Men unduly exclude and raze out the Names of so many out of that great Charter of Heaven, they will have a dreadful Account to give thereof to God.*

In answer to these childish Fears and undue Reflections upon us, I shall take the pains to transcribe what I have formerly written upon this Account, it being yet unanswered.

This new Art of pleading for Infant-baptism by virtue of their Church-membership, Covenant-Interest, &c. and not from the Scriptures directly, but altogether by remote, obscure, and far-fetch'd Consequences; I say, considering these Subtilties of Mr. Baxter and others, I perceive the Controversy to rise very high, and Questions thereupon to be multiplied, inasmuch that I have had for my share not less than five hundred of them sent out by Mr. Barret abovenamed, which has been redargued in two Books of *Antiqueries*.

Hereupon I conceived it needful to consider this matter, for I perceived very wise and good Men engaged on both sides; and as I believe much more straining in the Point of Church-membership, or Covenant-Interest of Infants than needed. By which the Readers of the Controversy, as handled between Mr. Baxter and Mr. Tombs, shall sooner fill their Heads with Amazement, than their Hearts with Satisfaction, in tracing the several Meanders of their Scholastick Disputations.

And though I am abundantly short of the Accomplishments of either of these Champions, yet standing to view till they engage, I hope I have thereby been led to the Consideration of a Medium, which if well considered and improved, will reconcile the Difference about Infants visible Church-membership, and Covenant-Interest, and yet do not doubt at all that Infant-baptism will be found unnecessary, and unlawful. To which purpose I shall lay down once more this Position.

That all Infants (as such) are in a visible State of Salvation by the Covenant of Grace, and so are of the universal Church of God; and cannot be put out of that blessed State, till by their voluntary Departure from God, by choosing sinful Ways, they destroy themselves.

And

And the better to convince my present Adversaries, I will make my Entrance hereunto by a Passage out of Mr. Baxter's Book, of *More Proves*, &c. pag. 8. where he saith,

"All Mankind is brought by Christ under a Covenant of Grace, which is not van, nor repealed by God, but as their Abuse of the Grace of the Covenant may cast them out.

"For as a Covenant of intire Nature was made with all Mankind in innocent *Adam*, so a Covenant of Grace was made with all Mankind in laps'd *Adam*, Gen. 3. 15. in the promised Seed; and renewed again with all Mankind in *Noah*.

Now this Doctrine being no more than plain Truth, we shall apply it to the case in hand, by shewing,

1. That this Covenant of Grace was a visible Church-Covenant.
2. That it was made with all Mankind, and takes place in their Infancy.
3. That it was never repealed by God.
4. That no Infant did ever abuse the Grace of this Covenant; and that therefore no Infant was ever cast out of this Covenant.

And then, fifthly, they all stand visible Members of the Catholick or universal Church, by virtue of this Covenant, however their Parents do abuse or neglect it. And hence it will follow, no dying Infant is damned, but are all in a visible State of Salvation. These things I hope to shew to Satisfaction.

Demonstration 1.

That this Covenant of Grace, first expressed, Gen. 3. 15. was either a Church-Covenant, or else there was no Church-Covenant in the World, that we read of from *Adam* to *Noah*; this being indeed all the Covenant which is found in Scripture during these times, besides that Covenant of intire Nature made before the Fall. And that Covenant of Nature being broken by *Adam*, and in him by all his Posterity, it being not a Covenant of Grace, could not afford means to justify the the Offenders in the Sight of God. There must therefore be some supervening Act of Grace or Mercy from God, else *Adam*, even whole Mankind who were then in his Loins, must have stood under Condemnation for ever; seeing no Man could redeem his Brother, nor give to God a Ransom for him, Psal. 49. 7.

I

†

It is the received Doctrine of Christians that the visible Church began in *Adam*; and that his Family was the Church, wherefore the whole World being then the Church, and that Church-Covenant being made with the whole World, which was to proceed from *Adam*, and this Covenant yet remaining, it follows against all Contradiction, that whole Mankind, considered as they came into the World, in the several Ages of it, are in that Covenant, and so in a visible State of Salvation, and therefore of the Universal Church of God.

But whereas many did apottatize from the Grace of God's Covenant, by corrupting his Way, Gen. 6. 12. it was necessary that they should be ejected; and therefore was the Profession of this blessed Covenant accommodated and appropriated to that Part of the Adult, who had not sinned themselves out of it. But still we do not find that the Innocent was ejected with the Guilty. For this is God's Order, *It is he only that sinneth, whom he will blot out of the Book of Life*, Exod. 32. 32, 33.

And therefore neither the Method which God took with *Noah* in settling the Covenant of his Grace; nor yet that Order which he observed with *Abraham*, Gen. 12. was exclusive of any Infant in the World, as to the Grace or Mercy of eternal Life, no more than the Establishment of it by Christ in the Gospel, in a far more excellent way, for distinguishing the precious from the vile, is in any wise, no not in the least *iota*, exclusive of any dying Infant of ill Men: but contrary-wise the Right of Infants, without excepting any of them, is asserted by Christ in this last and most ample Edition of the Covenant of Grace.

Nor can any Man shew either by Scripture or Reason, that God will shut out all the dying Infants of wicked Men, from Life and Salvation by Christ, no nor so much as any one of them. For we are sure that the Judgment of God is according to Truth, that the Judge of all the Earth will do Right: That the condemned shall all be judged according to the Deeds done in the Body. But as for poor Infants, what Evil have they done?

Demonstration 2.

That this Covenant was made with all Mankind, because it was made with *Adam*, without the least Intimation of the Exclusion of any part of his Posterity (as they proceed from him) to the End of the World. Neither has God himself explained the Covenant of Grace to be exclusive of any, but for the Cause of their own Iniquity. And this was evident first in the case of *Cain*, who not being faithful in his Offering,

E

was

was not accepted; yet God was pleased to tell him how he might be accepted, *Gen. 4. 7. If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?* It should seem God never rejected *Cain* till now, neither did he now delight to reject him, but graciously expostulates with *Cain* to convince him of his Evil, and assures him of Acceptance, *if he did well.*

If then *Cain* had an Interest in the Grace of God, who can we suppose to be shut out of it? Or how should Infants be cast out of his Favour, till they with *Cain* shut themselves out of it?

Evident it is that the Covenant of Grace extended to those Rebels in the old World, because we read that the Long-suffering of God waited in the Days of *Noah* upon them, and he gave them *time of Repentance*; and sent a *Preacher of Righteousness (even the Righteousness of Faith)* among them. *Heb. 11. 7. 2 Pet. 2. 5.* therefore it is said Christ went by his Spirit and preached to them, *1 Pet. 3.* though none of them believed his Word.

Now such Acts on God's part are great Evidences of his Graciousness towards Men, and shews that he remembers his Covenant made in Christ for them, even for them that rebel against him, and so perish. And then how should we think that he should not be gracious to poor Infants, who never rebelled against him?

Demonstration 3.

The Covenant of Grace, Gen. 3. 15. was never repealed by God. For if it be, there is now no Covenant at all: Nor can it be repealed to one Man, but it must be repealed to all Men. 'Tis true, Men may forfeit the Mercy of God held forth in that Covenant, but the Covenant cannot be repealed, for then there can be no certainty of Mercy for Sinners. Christ our Lord may as soon be made null, as this Covenant: For what if some do apostatize, shall this make the Grace of God without effect? God forbid. When we continually see the Covenant of God's Grace displayed, making Overtures of Kindness to Sinners, *by beseeching them to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5.* What shall we say? Has the chief of Sinners this Benefit by the Covenant of Grace? And shall poor innocent Babes have no Benefit by it? Is he not worse than the chief of Sinners, that is thus exposed to Damnation? Sure there are better things with God for poor Babes, and chiefly in this he has not given Parents power to make void the Covenant of his Grace with respect to their Infants: For he hath said, *the Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father: The Soul that sinneth it shall die.*

Demon-

Demonstration 4.

No Infant did ever abuse the Grace of the Covenant made with them in Adam; therefore no Infant was ever cast out of it.

Although it is most true that Original Sin is come upon Infants, and Death by Sin: *Yet this is as true,* That Original Sin was not committed against the Covenant of Grace. And therefore Infants are not guilty of any Sin committed against the Covenant of Grace, and consequently are not deprived of the Benefit of it.

Otherwise if the Sin of subsequent Parents should make void the Grace of the second Covenant, as the Sin of *Adam* made his Posterity guilty of the Breach of the first Covenant, we may then cry out, *who then can be saved?* But therefore was our Saviour the *Mediator of the New Testament, for the Redemption of the Transgressions which were under the first Testament.*

Wherefore seeing Infants stand acquitted from the Trespases committed by *Adam* against the first Testament or Covenant, and having not sinned against the Grace of the second Testament, they cannot come in the Condemnation of Hellish Torments. The Church of *Rome*, who make Baptism as necessary for Infants as any Body does, yet they have so much Kindness, as to condemn Infants only to a State of Loss, but not of Torment: Whilst those of *Calvin's* Spirit do send them (by their Doctrine) to yell among the damned in Hell-fire. Sure this is no part of the Gospel, *I will not call it so:* Yet I will say those that reject that great Salvation held forth in the Gospel, are justly condemned; but this is not the case of Infants.

Demonstration 5.

That all dying Infants are Members of that vast Body of which Christ is the Saviour finally, and so of his Church considered as universal, is evident, because they are in a visible State of Salvation. And I think no Man will deny the Catholick Church to contain the whole Number of the saved.

I have nothing more to do, but to prove all Infants in a visible State of Salvation; which shall be done more particularly by answering such Objections as I have met with, more especially from Mr. *Barret.*

Objection I. *I gave you thanks for some things before granted concerning Infants, and I here promise more Thanks if you will prove the same of all Infants.*

Ansiv. When I speak of the Right which Infants have to Life by Christ, I intend it only of that Right derived to them by the first Edition of the Covenant of Grace, *Gen. 3. 15.* wherein they are equally concerned, and so have the same or equal Right. And I hope you cannot charge them with forfeiting the Grace of that Covenant, and then they cannot be damned.

Our Saviour saith, *it is not the Will of his Heavenly Father, that so much as one of these little Ones should perish*, which is as true of Infants, as of any Persons in the World.

Object. II. *The Overthrow of both these Generations in the old World, is a strange Medium to prove the Salvation of all Infants by.*

Ansiv. The meer destroying of the Infants of those who were called the Sons of God, as well as the Infants of others, *Gen. 6. and 7.* I do not say is any Evidence of God's saving any of them.

But this is that which I say, it shews them to be in one State or Predicament: And how shall any Man prove the Salvation of so much as of any one of them, better than I shall prove the Salvation of them all: And shall we suffer it to enter into our Hearts that God sent them all to be damned in Hell?

By no means. When therefore we read, *2 Pet. 2. 5.* That God brought the Flood upon the World of the Ungodly; and *Jude 7.* 'tis said of those who suffered the Vengeance of eternal Fire, that they were given over to Fornication, and went after strange Flesh. May we not perceive some Light which may guide us to believe that God did not plead in such Wrath against the Infant-seed as he did against the wicked themselves? And though it is true, God suffered the Infants to die with the wicked Parents, yet that is no Argument of God's condemning them to Hell. For did not the same God suffer his Servant *Sampson* to die with the Fall of the Theatre, among the wicked *Philistines*?

And we see the righteous often taken away by the same common Calamities which have befallen Nations and Cities. Let us remember how tender the Lord was of the Infants of *Nineveh*, and that may convince

us that the same gracious God could not be cruel to the Infants of the old World; and he that made those little ones an Argument to justify his sparing sinful *Nineveh*, against the murmuring of *Fonah*, would certainly make that an Argument for us to believe, that had his Judgments proceeded against that City, according to the Prophecy of *Fonah*; yet he would have distinguished between the Innocent and the Nocent, in respect of future Punishment and Mercy: For it was not the Sin of the Infants, which cryed to Heaven for Vengeance, but of the grown Persons.

When we consider how hardly Almighty God was drawn to inflict those Judgments upon Mens Bodies in the old World, and in *Sodom, Gen. 18.* and frequently where we read of the Execution of his Judgments; it might justly seem very strange that Men should think that God can be so easily provoked to damn Infants to Hell: For him I say to damn poor Infants to Eternal Fire, who was so unwilling to inflict on the Babes in *Nineveh* so much as a Temporal Judgment; nay he is unwilling to destroy the very Cattel for Mans Sin, *Fonah 4.* which are only capable to suffer a short of Death. And can it become any Christian to think that God will send Millions of poor dying Infants to Hell? Pray what have they done so highly to stir up his Wrath against them? let any Man shew a Reason for it if he can.

Object. III. *To the Text Rom. 5. the Free-Gift abounded towards all Men to Justification of Life. This [all] must be restrained to [all in Christ].*

Ansiv. But by your Favour there are none so out of Christ in Infancy, but that God hath Mercy for them in Christ: *John 1. 29.* so that here is no Restraint to the Justification here spoken of, till Men abuse this Mercy of God by sinning against their own Souls. Nor can your Restriction which I suppose would limit this Free-Gift to the Elect only, hold any Agreement with the Scope of the Place. For seeing all Mankind are personated as well in the second, as in the first *Adam*, you can no more exclude any from the Justification of Life, as having abounded towards them by Christ, than you can exclude them from the Condemnation which abounded towards them by *Adam*. For tell me how many came under Condemnation by the Sin of *Adam*? Is there any one, or any Infant that can plead Impunity? Why even so (saith the Apottle)

the Free-Gift abounded towards all Men to Justification of Life.

And may we not safely conclude, that had Mankind never been guilty of any other Sin but that of *Adam's*, I say upon a Supposition that *Adam's* Posterity from the time of the Promise, *Gen. 3. 15.* had lived holily, and done no Iniquity, would you not conclude with me, that none should have perished in Hell-Torments? And if you grant this, then we must either find some Man SO concerned in the Covenant of Grace, AS that if he sinned against this Covenant, his Posterity is damned with him eternally, as all *Adam's* Posterity was exposed to Condemnation for his Sin; or else we must hold that no Infant shall die eternally for *Adam's*, nor for any other Persons Iniquity.

If you name any Man, thus concerned in the Covenant of Grace, you can name none so apt for the purpose as *Adam*, seeing we were all in him when the Covenant was made with him, and there is no doubt but that he sinned after the Covenant was made *Gen. 3. 15.* yet where do we find any Sin which he afterward committed, imputed to any Part of his Posterity? And seeing we cannot prove an universal Resurrection from *1 Cor. 15. 21, 22.* unless Mankind be equally concerned in the Death of Christ, we must necessarily believe whole Mankind to be interested in him, and as interested in him, they are in a saneable State, from that Wrath which lay against them by reason of the Sin of *Adam*: So then Infants being justified from the Guilt of *Adam's* Transgression, by Christ the Lamb of God; who shall lay any thing to the Charge of poor Infants, that may justly cast them into Hell-fire? Sure it is but meet that Men should be able plainly to convict them, before they thus condemn them.

Yea, you that hold the eternal Damnation of Infants, ought you not to bring substantial proof for so dreadful a Doctrine? And when you have done your worst that way, you have only destroyed your own Hope concerning your own dying Infants. For I am perswaded you are not so unwise to think (whatever you make others believe) that your Infants are saved because of your pretended Church-membership and Baptism. Nay Mr. Petto plainly tells us, *that all Infants that are baptised are not saved*; as I have shewed above. And it is impossible without a Miracle for him to know this, or that any one of them is saved, unless he comes on this Foundation that none of them shall perish.

Object.

†

Object. IV. *To assert the Salvation of all dying Infants, seems to imply, that God's destroying the old World and Sodom, &c. were eminent Acts of God's Mercy, rather than of Justice, &c. help me over this Difficulty.*

Answer. Although it is not unjust for God to take Infants out of the World at any time, yet his Justice in destroying them in the old World and *Sodom*, lay not against the Infants, as I proved in the precedent Answer. But in Justice he punished those wicked Parents, in putting a Period to their Posterity. And did not God in the Days of *Noah* destroy the Beasts and Fowls of Heaven, yet who so weak to think that he was offended with them? Was the Lord angry with the Beasts of the Field? God was just in taking away *David's* Child, *2 Sam. 12. 14.* yet who so rash to say that God did this in Justice against the Child? much less that the Child was damned, or that God was angry with the Child. *David* was far from such an Opinion, for tho that Child was conceived and born in Sin, as much as any, yet *David* nothing feared the Damnation of the Child, but rather shews his Confidence of its Salvation, when he said, *I shall go to it.* For had it gone to Hell Torments, he would not have comforted himself with Thoughts of going to it.

Object. V. *We do not say that Infants do perish purely for another's Sin, but for their own contracted.*

Answer. I cannot see any Agreement with God's Justice in this Objection, nor Truth in it self. I can hear Men talk big Words against Infants, as if they were very great Sinners, yet I never saw any Proof, that any Infant had any Sin of its own, for which you would here make them perish.

The Scripture saith Sin is the Transgression of a Law, and tells us also where no Law is, *there is no Transgression.* You must therefore either shew some Law to be given to Infants, or else you cannot make them guilty of any Sin of their own. And seeing you have granted that none shall perish purely for another's Sin, it remains for you, or some body else, to shew what Sin has been committed by them, or any of them, for which they incur the Damnation of Hell. You may talk of Infants *contracting Sin of their own*; but I am to learn how this can be said of those who neither act nor consent to Sin at all. Such Scriptureless Notions are fit-

tee

ter to be exploded than embraced.

And though you seem to have some Charity for those and their Seed, who only come up to the Covenant of Grace made with Adam and Noah, though they never heard the Gospel, whiltt you say, you do not rank them with Infidels; yet this is but a slender Kindness: you do not say they shall be saved, and you are positive in this, that Infants are not saved by the Covenant of Grace, if they be neither Believers, nor the Seed of such. How this Doctrine will stand with the Justice of a gracious God, I cannot conceive when I consider, that God hath not given to Infants either Capacity to believe, or Liberty to choose whether they will be the Seed of Believers or Unbelievers. Will you yet say a gracious God will be more harsh in Acts of Justice, than the Rules will bear which he hath given to Men? *Deut. 22. 25, 26.* Here he will not have a Damel punished, though her Body be defiled, *because she could not help it.* And yet you would have him send Infants to Hell for that which they cannot help!

It is not the part of a wise Legislator (saith one) to recede from his own Laws; much leis to destroy them, by acting contrary to them. It must be a fault then in you, thus unjustly to represent the God of Justice. Is the Covenant of Grace set upon such a little Point, as that the greatest Part of Infants cannot possibly have any Benefit by it? So you teach, who affirm Infants cannot be saved unless they be Believers, or the Seed of Believers. Why call you a Covenant made with Infants on such Terms a Covenant of Grace? sure such absolutely impossible Terms in any Covenant are not very gracious, when the Non-observation of them is Damnation without remedy, and that of the Innocent too.

You would condemn this in Men; you would abhor to hear or receive such Terms of Man; yet thus you make many believe that God deals with the greatest part of poor Infants.

Object. VI. *According to your Doctrine the taking away the Infants of the old World and of Sodom, was a great Mercy, because had they lived to Age, many of them might have been damned for Wickedness.*

Ansiv. The taking away by Death of the Infants of the old World and Sodom, is neither an Instance of Justice nor Mercy to Infants in the main; any more than the taking away thousands of Infants daily by Death throughout the World: For whenever they die, they are taken a-

way

way from ALL EVIL TO COME, and so it is always a Mercy and such was the Mercy of God to Infants in the Old World and in Sodom: But whenever they are taken away, we know it is for Sin, even that of Adam. And sometimes their Death is hastened for the Sin of their Parents, as in the case of David's Child, and the Old World, and Sodom; and thus their being taken away is always a Judgment: And the Judgment lieth much in this, that Mens Posterity is either quite cut off, or much weakened; thus was the Old World and Sodom punished, their Succession was cut off.

And though it is true, if those Infants in the Old World and Sodom had lived to Age, many of them might have been damned for Wickedness, yet (not to insist upon the Prescience of Almighty God) to ballance that, it is as true that a far greater Multitude, in few Generations, both of Infants and others, which might have proceeded from them, might have been saved. So that though we have no ground to doubt of the Salvation of these dying Infants in the Old World and in Sodom, yet we may see a just Judgment executed in both.

Object. VII. *Should the French King destroy all the Infants of the Pagans, would not this be a Judgment? Sure had the World your Light and Knowledge, they ought not to be sorry for the spoiling of their Cities, and depopulating their Countries.*

Ansiv. What if the French King should do thus? it follows not that here is not a Judgment in all this, neither yet that God hath no Mercy for those murdered Infants.

But pray consider, whiltt we all condemn such Cruelty in Tyrants, we must by no means think or say, that our gracious God, when the Tyrant has murdered them, will take these Infants and cast them into Hellish Torments: Were not this to represent Almighty God to be the worst of Tyrants?

And let no Man murmur against God for saving such Infants (or all Infants), who when Men have done their worst, he will prevent that which would be far worse to poor Infants than the worst that Man can do. And though I may be satisfied that my Child or Friend is gone to Heaven, yet I may lawfully be sorry for both, so that I sorrow not as one without Hope.

F

Object.

Object. VIII. *What shall we make of Ephes. 2. 3, 12. And were by Nature Children of Wrath, even as others? That at that time you were without Christ, without Hope. If there be no Ground to doubt the Salvation of their Infants, is there not some Hope?*

Ansiv. I grant that all Adam's Posterity with himself were Children of Wrath; and take that Wrath in as large a sense as you please, it hurts not my Cause at all: Seeing it is evident that Christ abolished that Wrath and Death, and brought Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel, which he preached to whole Adam, Gen. 3. 15. and then took whole Adam into Grace and Favour; so that till they, or any of them, become the Serpents Seed, they stand in a State of Favour and Grace, which shall deliver them from Wrath and Death. And it is most certain, no Infant is the Serpents Seed, it being out of his Power to beget them to be his Offspring, seeing they are out of the reach of his Temptations during Infancy. Howbeit this Place, Ephes. 2. is best interpreted of the Adult or grown Persons, for these, of whom it was said they were without Hope, &c. it is said, they were dead in Trespasses and Sins, and walked according to the Course of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, which now worketh in the Hearts of the Children of Disobedience; such as had their Conversation in the Lusts of their Flesh, fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind: And SO were by Nature the Children of Wrath.

But what is all this to the innocent Babes of the Gentiles? they were not thus the Children of Wrath, no nor out of the Covenant of Grace, as made with Adam, having never abused the Grace of that Covenant. So that there was Hope (or Ground of Hope) concerning the dying Infants of the Gentiles, whether their Parents understood it or not: but no Hope concerning themselves, considered in their wicked Courses.

Neither could the Hope of these Gentiles (when they believed) concerning their Infants, stand upon the same Grounds on which their own Hope was founded, seeing these were saved through Faith, and built up an Habitation of God through the Spirit. Only this is very true, they now understood the Riches of God's Grace to Mankind, and that God had pity for them, when they were dead in Trespasses and Sins. And therefore they could not rationally doubt of his good Will towards their dying Infants: For still his Unwillingness to destroy the actual Sinner, is Argument enough that he will never destroy the innocent Child eternally.

What

What Hope there is of all Infants entering into Heaven (however it may be hid from the Pagans) is evident enough from our Saviour's Speech; *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Now suppose I take the Infant of a Jew or Pagan for my Pattern, and labour that my Conversation may answer to such a Precedent, in point of Innocency, Humility, and Simplicity; will not this as well accord the Intent of our Saviour's Words, as if I took the Child of a Christian for my Pattern? *certes* it would.

And indeed our Saviour here speaks as much for our Comfort concerning all little Childrens Capacity, to enter into Heaven, as for any one of them; as also when the Apostle exhorts us, *as touching Malice, to be as Children;* Does he not hereby justify the whole in that State of Infancy to be devoid of that Evil? And why even of our selves do we not judg what is right? Could any Man from the Beginning to this Day, bring the least Charge against one Infant more than another? Unless God by Miracle shew some special Power upon them, no Difference can be seen in them in point of Innocency.

Object. IX. *But have you not forgotten that you told us you do not doubt but the Promises made to the Seed of the Righteous, and the Promises of shewing Mercy to them that love God, remain unrevoked?*

Ansiv. I have not forgotten that, but still believe that there are many more Blessings pertaining to the Seed of the Righteous, according to the Texts by you alledged, than to others. And that they may be better considered, I will set that down in Words which you write in Figures; *Psal. 102. 28. The Children of thy Servants shall continue, and their Seed shall be established before thee.*

This had doubtless been the Portion of the Sons of God in the Days of Noah, had they not sinned with the rest of Mankind: *Psal. 103. 17. The Mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, to them that fear him, and his Righteousness to Childrens Children, to them that keep his Covenant, and remember his Commandments to do them. Prov. 20. 7. The just walketh in his Integrity, his Children are blessed after him.*

Now what do these Places prove? sure nothing less than that no Infants shall be saved, but the Infants of Believers, &c. and if not, how do they suit your Case? They prove indeed that God will bleis the Posterity of

his faithful Servants if they keep his Covenant, and remember his Commandments to do them: I think *David* well expounds this Place in *Psal.* 37. 25. And yet I grant, though you prove it not, that there are very many other Blessings (even in Infancy) does attend the Seed of the Righteous.

They being a Seed of many Prayers, and devoted to God from the Womb, as far as their pious Parents has Authority to do it; whilst, God knows, others are destitute of these Blessings, being *crossed* and *exorcised* among the *Pædobaptists*, and offered to *Molech* among the *Jews*, and the like among the *Heathens*. And yet for all this, I can see no Ground to think that the righteous God will punish with Hellish Torments those dying Infants for the Wrong which their Parents have done them.

It being inconceivable how it can stand with his Attributes, either of Mercy or Justice, both which must have Effect upon them: His Justice hath its Effect on Infants in Diseases, Sickness and Death. Now either his Mercy must have Effect upon *dying Infants* in the next World, or not at all, if not in that World, how shall that Saying be true; *His tender Mercies are over all his Works*? Will he never shew tender Mercy to Infants, who only lived to cry and die in this World, and must they now die eternally in Hell? Is this your tender Mercy to Infants? O ye cruel *Pædobaptists*!

Object. X. *If the Blessing of Abraham came upon the Gentiles through Faith, Gal. 3. 14. how does it reach to the Infants of the Gentiles which do not believe?*

Ans. I told you that the Blessing in respect of Eternal Life was not peculiar to *Abraham* and his Seed, but was made as well to *Adam* and his Seed, and so common to Mankind, and may well be called the common Salvation, being derived from Christ promised, *Gen. 3. 15.* (before *Abraham* was) who is therefore the Saviour of all Men.

Indeed *Abraham*, and so all Believers, have many things in special or peculiar Blessings, as a People engaged in the Duties of Religion: Whilst Unbelievers are under a wrathful Sentence, because they neglect so great Salvation. But all this concerns not dying Infants, who neglect not this Salvation, and so forfeit not their Right to that common Salvation obtained by Christ for Mankind.

In *Gal. 3. 14.* the Apostle speaks of the *Promise of the Spirit*, which as it concerns the Church under the Gospel-frame, does not concern Infants.

Infants. It being understood of a greater measure of Wisdom, and Power to walk in the Paths of Righteousness, than was ordinary under the former Testament; *2 Tim. 1. 6. Gal. 3. 2, 3, 5, 7. Gal. 5. 25.*

Nor can you with any shew of Reason say, that I make the Salvation of Infants run in a fleshly Line, seeing I derive it only from the free Grace of God, manifested in the *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, to take away the Sin of the World.*

Nor do I consider *Adam* in a State of Nature, but as under a Covenant of Grace, from whom the second *Adam* must in time proceed as touching his Flesh, and therefore his Descent is reckoned from him, *Luk. 3. 23.* to the end. In this second *Adam*, the Repairer of Mankind, do I place the Salvation of all Men. And of the Infant-Race, I say, their Title to this Grace is not tyed to Man's Will, to sin them out of it at their Pleasure, nor can the Devil himself deprive them of this Grace of Life. And therefore they being thus written in the Book of Life, and not being under the Sentence of the Book of Conscience, they cannot be hurt of the second Death.

To what you say about *God's putting the Salvation of Infants out of his own Hand.* I say, that though he put the Salvation of no Creature out of his own Hand according to my Opinion; yet when he stretched forth his Hand to Gain-sayers, as *Rom. 10.* and gives them the Word of Life, and they put it from them, *Act. 13. 46.* Then Men may truly be said to have a Prize in their Hands, and to put it from them, even the Salvation of their Souls.

And then I pray consider, that if their putting Salvation from themselves, be equally or really a putting it from their Infants (as that must be your Opinion, or else we differ not) then I say, according to your Opinion, God suffers Men to damn poor Infants whom he would save. Seeing, according to your Doctrine, had the Parents believed, their Infants had been in the Covenant of Grace. But now for their Fathers Sin (for what you say of their own contracted, is but a Fable) they are left by you in the Kingdom of the Devil to suffer with the Devil and his Angels for ever. Now this dreadful Doctrine can never be proved by the Scriptures, though some have assayed to do it.

I find indeed *Dr. Fulk* saying, *That Calvin holdeth all Infants under the Sentence of Eternal Damnation; only he admits, that such Infants as are Elect and born again by the Spirit of God, may be saved.* But I find no Proof, that any Infant, dying lo, is reprobate to Eternal Damnation: The Scripture says no such thing.

†

Indeed.

Indeed *Diodate* would have us believe that *God* cast *Esau* (even before he was born) *out of his Love as a Father*: But here is no Proof. For if we should admit his Gloss upon *Rom. 9. 13.* yet we are to consider that *God* knew what *Esau* would be in time, and did here fore-shew what in time should be done concerning him. *Esau* lived to be a Man, and a very sinful Man. *God* knew all this before. *Esau* is not to be ranked with dying Infants, therefore the Instance of *Esau* is nothing to the purpose. And this Instance failing, as it evidently doth, I am sure there is not the least shew of Proof in the Scripture for the *Damnation of Dying Infants*. And therefore no Man ought to believe such strange Doctrine, nor trouble the World nor Church of *God* with it.

When our Saviour denounces the dreadful Sentence of *Hell's Damnation*, he directs his Speech to Hypocrites, and grievous Sinners. But he has better things in store for poor Infants; testifying that *to them belongs the Kingdom of God*. In his gracious Arms therefore we shall leave all dying Infants, for the obtaining that Blessing of Life, without which they are more wretched than the fallen Angels, for they had once a blessed state, but proudly fell from it. But here it is poor Infants are above these Angels; Infants have a Redeemer, but the fallen Angels have none.

*Glory to God in the Highest for his free Grace
towards all Dying Infants, and let all good
Christians say, Amen.*

F I N I S.