



SPECIAL NOTE

**ITEM SCANNED AS SUPPLIED
PAGINATION IS AS SEEN**

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John noble

Jⁿ Blackwell *

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Truth Vindicated,

I N

Several Branches thereof;

A N D

Many OBJECTIONS fairly
and soberly Answered.

To which is annexed

A little Treatise of the COVENANTS,
containing a Description of the Covenant
of Grace, and several Marks of distinction,
by which it appears, That the Covenant
that was made with *Abraham* and his
Natural Seed, considered as such, was not
the Covenant of Works, nor yet the Co-
venant of Grace, but a peculiar Covenant.

*What thing soever I command you, that observe
and do; thou shalt not add thereto, nor dimi-
nish from it, Deut. 12. 32.*

*Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptiz-
ing them in the Name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Matth. 28. 19.*

*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I
have commanded you, and lo I am with you al-
way, even unto the end of the World, Amen. v. 20.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for the Author. 1685.

TO THE
READER.

Courteous Reader,

T Hou hast here the substance of what hath past in Writing between a Baptist and a Pedo-baptist, about the point of Baptism, that hath been long Controverted among us. The reason why the Pedo-baptist goes Nameless, is because the Author hath a Respect for him: First, Upon the account of his Abilities. Secondly, Upon the Account of his Moderation in Writing, not dipping his Pen so much in Vinegar as others have done. And, Thirdly, Upon the Account of his Conversation. To which is annexed a little Treatise of the Covenants. Now tho' there are several things contained in the Covenants that are handled in the first part of the book, yet it's thought necessary to print them by
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To the Reader.

themselves, where thou mayest see the scope of them more fully and clearly. All that the Author desires of thee, is, that thou wouldest read with an unprejudic'd Eye, and weigh it in the ballance of the Sanctuary: Try it by the Word, which is the great standard, a Touch-stone of Truth, and so far as it hath foundation in the Word, receive it, and no further. Farewell.

Truth

Truth Vindicated,

I N

Several Branches thereof, &c.

S I R,

I Have received your Paper, entitled, *Infant-Baptism Vindicated*, and have returned my Answer.

Your first Argument is this, *Those that are to be entred into Covenant with God, and to be admitted Members of the visible Church, have a right to Baptism, and ought to be baptized, there being no other way of divine institution (under the Gospel) of admission of members, but by baptism.*

But the Infants of believing Parents ought to be admitted into covenant with God, members of the visible Church, therefore they have a right to baptism.

First, I answer, As to the consequence of your Major Proposition, which is this, That those that are solemnly to be admitted into the visible Church, (if by the visible Church you mean an instituted Church) have a right to baptism, I grant it, though I deny that Baptism is the formal constituting cause of Church-Membership: For that which may be but once administred, is not the formal, constituting cause; but Baptism may be

but once administred, therefore it is not the formal constituting cause. For Example, A Person may be justly ejected, and upon repentance received again: But if baptism were the formal constituting cause, then must he be as often baptized as received.

Secondly, I deny your *Minor*, which is, That Children of Believing Parents ought to be entred into covenant with God, and admitted Members of the visible Church.

(1.) You say, the Covenant that God made with *Abraham*, belonged to his Seed; and while his seed were in an infant state, they were in covenant, and engaged to God by circumcision, which was then the seal of the Covenant, *Gen. 17. 7, 8, 11, 12.*

To this I answer, *First*, This proves not that the Children of Believers ought solemnly to be taken into covenant with God, and admitted Church-Members, the Dispensation being changed, you your self do not tye to the rules of that dispensation: Under the legal dispensation a Bastard was not to enter into the Congregation of the Lord unto the tenth Generation, *Deut. 23. 2.* but you will admit a Bastard to enter in.

Secondly, I deny that all the seed of *Abraham* were circumcised; they were the Males only that were circumcised, and yet the Females were his Seed also.

Thirdly, I deny that covenant to which circumcision was set as the token, *Gen. 17. 11, 12.* to be the covenant of Grace: That covenant that might be broken was not the covenant of Grace; but the Covenant to which Circumcision was set as the token, was a Covenant that might be broken, *Gen. 17. 14.* therefore not the covenant of grace.

(2.) You

(2.) You say, that under the Government of Moses, Parents and Children entred into covenant with the Lord, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12.

First, Answer, This I grant you ; but I deny that covenant to be the covenant of Grace, for the Scripture makes a manifest difference between these two covenants.

First, They differ in respect of the Subjects ; the subjects of that covenant, *Deut.* 29. were the natural seed, considered as such, but these were not the subjects of the covenant of Grace, *Rom.* 9. 6, 7, 8. *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all Israel that are of Israel ; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called : So then they that are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are accounted for the seed : The Apostle distinguisheth here between the children of the flesh and the children of the promise ; and the same might be noted of Jacob and Esau, the one being hated, and the other loved : Must Esau be owned a subject of the covenant of Grace, who was an object of the Fathers hatred ? There are no more to be accounted the subjects of the covenant of Grace, either of Jews or Gentiles, then are related to Christ, Gal. 3. 29. If ye be Christs, then are ye Abrahams seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Secondly, That Covenant contained curses, (as well as blessings) *Deut.* 29. 20, 21. which might fall on the subjects thereof without a sanctified use of them, as they did on the evil sigs, *Jer.* 24. 8, 9, 10. but the covenant of Grace contains blessings only, *Jer.* 31. 33, 34. That these were two covenants, appears,

First, Because that covenant was broken, *verse*

32. but the covenant of Grace can't be broken, *Jer. 32. 40.*

Secondly, That Covenant contained only temporal blessings, *Deut. 28.* God did never promise a New Heart and a New Spirit by vertue of that covenant; if he had, all the natural seed should have had the enjoyment of it, for he is a faithful God, a covenant-keeping God; but the covenant of Grace contains spiritual blessings, *Jer. 31. 33, 34. I will write my law in their hearts, they shall all know me: I will forgive their iniquities, and remember their sins no more.*

Thirdly, That Covenant was conditional, as appears in that it was broken, *Jer. 31. 32.* but the covenant of Grace is absolute, *verse 33, 34.* That covenant was an old covenant, *Heb. 8. last.* the covenant of grace a new, *Heb. 9. 15.* That covenant was the first, the covenant of Grace the second, *Heb. 9. 18.* The covenant of Grace was a better covenant, *Heb. 8. 6.* the promises were better.

First, In that they contained spiritual blessings.

Secondly, In that they were absolute; that covenant is abrogated, *Zach. 11. 10, 11.* but the covenant of Grace still remains: That covenant being thus distinguished from the covenant of grace, no Argument can be drawn for the Church-membership and baptism of the children of Believers under the Gospel from that covenant dispensation.

In the next place you endeavour to prove that covenant to be the covenant of Grace, to which I need make no reply, it being answered already; only I shall examine your Scriptures, *Rom. 4. 13. Gal. 3. 14, 16, 17.* That the covenant here spoken of is the covenant of Grace, I grant; but these prove not the covenant, *Deut. 29.* to be the covenant of Grace, and that's the Work you have to do.

Secondly,

Secondly, These Scriptures do not prove the natural seed to be the subjects of the covenant of Grace, but the contrary ; he saith not of seeds, as of many, but of one, that is Christ, Christ Mystical, Head and Members, Christ and the Elect, *verse 29. If ye be Christs, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

First, Prove your relation to Christ, and then you may conclude your relation to *Abraham*; to *Abraham* and to his seed were the Promises made, not to every believer and his seed : *Abraham* had but two seeds, a natural and a spiritual ; the *Gentiles* are not his natural seed, nor can they be known to be spiritual, till they walk in the steps of *Abraham's* faith.

Secondly, As I have denied that covenant that was signed by circumcision to be the covenant of Grace, so I deny that the natural seed of *Abraham* did enter into that covenant by circumcision, their interest in that covenant was antecedent to their circumcision.

First, The covenant was made with *Abraham* fourteen years before circumcision was appointed, *Gen. 15. 18.* compared with *Gen. 17.*

Secondly, They were born interested in the covenant, but not circumcised till the eighth day ; if they had not had an interest in the covenant, then neglect of circumcision could not have been a breach of the covenant, as it was, *Gen. 17. 14.*

Thirdly, The Females were not circumcised at all, and yet they had an interest in the covenant as well as the Males.

Fourthly, I deny that interest which the natural seed had in that covenant, and that Church-membership which then they enjoyed, to be sufficient to privilege them to Baptism. Those that came to *John* to be baptized, *Mat. 3.* and *Luke 3.* and were

were rejected, had an interest in that covenant, they were Church-Members, they had *Abraham* to their Father, but this would not do, they must bring forth fruit meet for repentance; yet had they as strong an argument as any you have brought for the baptizing of infants.

They were all interested in the covenant, all Church-members, to whom Christ and *John* preached; but first disciples, and then baptized, *John* 4.

I. Your last Argument is this, *That if admitting infants into covenant with God, and so into the visible Church, be repealed, it belongs to us to shew when and how.*

I answer, before you challenge me to shew a repeal, you should first prove that this was once a Gospel-institution, as you hinted in your first argument, yet I am not to seek for a repeal of that Membership, and that covenant interest that you insist upon; it was then repealed when Christ was offered up, when they weighed for his price thirty pieces of silver, *Zach.* 11. 10. then was the covenant broken that God had made with all the people, their Covenant priviledges then ceased, their Church-state was then dissolved, their Tabernacle fell, all their Church Ordinances were at an end; *Israel* was no longer a separate people.

That it was then repealed, may further appear, in that as soon as Christ was risen, there was a new commission given out, *Mat.* 28. 19. *Mark* 16. 15. according to which the Apostles were to act; the old measures that you have insisted upon were laid by, and new measures were then taken, Church-Membership was no longer a birth-priviledge; *Henceforth know we no man after the flesh,* 2 *Cor.* 5. a Jew that before was born a Church-Member was no longer accounted such, unless in the judgment

of

of Charity he was new born, 1 Cor. 12. By one spirit are we all baptized into one body, and made to drink into one spirit, whether Jew or Gentile. Eph. 4. 4. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling : And to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of God : And can we think that this one baptism belongs to more than the members of that one body ? The universal visible Church extends not it self beyond the limits of this one body, and there is not one uncalled and unsanctified member to be found in this body ; they are all such in the judgment of Charity, and in receiving members into a particular instituted Church the Apostles keep close to the commission, Acts 2. 41. They first disciples, then baptized, then added unto the Church ; as many as Gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. The Titles given to particular Churches shew that they were Saints, such as in the judgment of charity were inherently holy, each individual member that was judged meet to stand in a Church-state was so accounted, 2 Thes. 1. 3. Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all aboundeth : This is not applicable to Infants, Phil. 1. 5, 6, 7. He that hath begun a good work in you, will not cease to perfect the same, as it is meet for me to think so of you all.

Your conclusion is this, That if the infants of Believers are still in the covenant, then they have a right to Baptism, the seal of the covenant.

I answer, This seemeth to be diverse, if not contradictory to what precedes : First, You contend for entrance into the covenant by baptism : Now you make an Interest in the covenant the ground of baptism, which you say is the seal of their interest.

terest. Before I return you an answer to this, I desire you to shew me the Scripture that calls baptism the Seal of the Covenant.

Arguments for Believers Baptism in opposition to Infant Baptism.

Give me leave now to offer you something for Believers Baptism in opposition to Infants.

If such as are disciplined to Christ by the Word are the only subjects of baptism, according to Christ's Commission, then Infants are not.

But such as are disciplined to Christ by the Word are the only subjects of Baptism, according to Christ's Commission, therefore Infants are not.

The first Proposition I prove thus,

First, If Infants be incapable of being disciplined to Christ by the Word, then they are not the subjects of baptism according to Christ's commission; but they are so, &c.

Secondly, If Infants be incapable of learning Christ by the Word, then they are incapable of being disciplined to Christ by the Word; but they are so, &c.

Thirdly, If Infants are incapable of learning Self-denial for Christ by the Word, then are they incapable of being disciplined to Christ by the Word; but they are so, &c.

The second Proposition is proved, *Mat. 28. 19. Go, disciple to me all nations, baptizing them, &c.* First disciple, and then baptize. That the subjects of baptism must be disciplined, I shall add one Argument:

If the Apostles, who well understood their Lords commission, did first disciple and then baptize, then are disciples the only subjects of Baptism, but they did so, *Acts 2. 41.* This was their practice

every

every where, not one instance can be given to the contrary ; there is no president of their baptizing of Infants, no, not one, and the want of a president does strongly conclude that there was no precept ; now if there be neither precept nor president to be found, then is there no such thing as Infant-baptism of Divine-institution.

I come now to reply to your second Papers, which you sent to vindicate Infant-baptism, as you entitled them.

Your *Major Proposition* you say I grant, which was this, *That those that ought to admitted members of the visible church, ought to be baptized.*

Reply, Here you misrepresent it ; I said, if by the visible Church you meant an instituted Church, I did grant it ; I know no formal way of admitting members into the universal visible church, unless you call the preaching of the word the formal way, for those that are called out of the world by the preaching of the Word to embrace Jesus Christ, are upon their owning and professing of him, to be judged members of the universal visible Church, provided their conversation does answer their profession.

But here you say, I deny that Baptism is the formal cause of their admission ; and the reason I give for it is this, that if baptism were the formal cause of Church-membership, then it must be repeated when an Excommunicated Person is restored.

To this you answer, that there is no need to repeat baptism, for Excommunication does not wholly unchurch a person, or make him no member of the Church.

Reply, Here I must take your own word, for you offer no proof to it, and your bare word cannot in the least shake my Argument ; and now give
me

me leave to tell you, that a person justly excommunicated is not only cut off from communion, but is cast out from being a member of that particular body in which he once stood, 1 Cor. 5. 13. *Wherefore put away from among your selves that wicked person: Mat. 28. 17. Let him be to thee as an Heathen Man or a Publican.*

Your *Minor Proposition* you say was this, *But the children of believers ought to be entred into covenant with God, and admitted members of the visible Church.* This you say I deny, though I grant that the covenant of God made with *Abraham* took in his Children, and that they were Church-Members under the Law. You say, the reason of my denial is this, because the administration is changed, the Gospel-administration differs from that under the Law, so that it does not follow that the children of Believers are now to be admitted by Baptism. Your answer to this is, that the covenant of grace is differently administered under the Law and Gospel, but those different administrations do not make the covenant different.

Reply, First, Here is a grant given that the administration is changed, and if so, then must we take our measures from the law of the new administration, and not from the old.

Secondly, I grant the covenant of Grace to be the same; that which I denied was, that the covenant which was signed with circumcision was the covenant of Grace.

Secondly, You say, the covenant that God made with *Abraham* and his seed was the Gospel-Covenant.

Reply, I never denied that neither, (if by his seed are intended his spiritual seed) that which I denied was, that the covenant God made with *Abraham*

and

and his natural seed, (considered as such) was the covenant of Grace.

You say, it was the Gospel Covenant, and that God promised to be a God to him, and to his seed after him, implying that he would afford to them that were in covenant with him all blessings that could be expected from a gracious God, *Gen. 17. 7.*

Reply, First, I grant that covenant *Gen. 17. 7.* to be the covenant of Grace; but here take notice, the seed were his spiritual seed, not his natural, considered as such, *Verse 45. A Father of many nations have I made thee:* The Apostle *Rom. 4. 16, 17.* quotes this very Text, and applies it to the spiritual seed.

Secondly, God hath here made himself over to be their God, absolutely to bestow on them all blessings that might be expected from a gracious God, and what can these be less than Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification? And if so, these two things will follow: First, That none of the subjects of this covenant shall miss of either of these blessings. Secondly, That such of Abraham's seed that go without these blessings were never the subjects of this covenant.

Thirdly, You say, the covenant that God made with Abraham, *Gen. 17. 7.* is more likely to be the covenant of Grace than that *Gen. 15. 18.* which I grant to be the covenant of Grace.

Reply, This is your mistake, in saying, I granted that covenant *Gen. 15.* to be the covenant of grace, I granted no such thing; however, I thank you for telling me that, that *Gen. 17. 7.* is more likely to be the covenant of grace than the other, for I deny the other to be the covenant of grace, for it contained temporal blessings only; *Unto thy seed have I given this whole land.* And now that there may be no more

more mistakes, I will shew you that covenant I deny to be the covenant of Grace; it's that which God made with *Abraham* and the natural seed, *Gen. 15. 18.* which was again renew'd *Gen. 17. 8.* and so to the *15.* and that was dedicated with the blood of the sacrifices, *Exod. 24. 8.* and that was again renewed, *Deut. 29. 10, 11.* in all which places the subjects are the same, the natural seed, considered as such; the inheritance the same, the land of *Canaan*; this is that covenant that contain'd temporal blessings only, that covenant that is distinguished from the covenant of grace, *Jer. 31. 32, 33.* as appears by comparing the *32* verse with *Deut. 29. 25.* this is that covenant which is distinct from the covenant of grace, *Heb. 8. 6, 7.* and so to the end, and *Heb. 9. 16, 17, 18.*

Fourthly, You say, that when God renewed this covenant with *Abraham*, he promised in more plain terms, that in *his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*, *Gen. 22. 18.*

Reply, I grant that the covenant of grace was here renewed, and that here is a promise of all spiritual blessings, Grace here, and Glory hereafter, which is and shall come upon every individual person that is a subject of that covenant: But this promise was made to the spiritual seed, not to the natural: This promise was made in Christ, and to those only that are Christs; *If ye be Christs, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*, *Gal. 3. 29.* This promise takes not in every individual person of all Nations, though its said all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed, but such only as are related unto Christ, *Gal. 3. 8, 9, 10.* God preached the Gospel to *Abraham*, saying, in thee shall all the Nations of the earth be blessed: So then, they that are of faith, (that is of Christ, faith being taken objectively)

jectively) are blessed with faithful Abraham: For as many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse. If this promise had been made to the natural seed, considered as such, not one of them should have gone without the benefit thereof. Hath God made this promise to the natural seed, and yet many of them go without the blessing thereof? How will it then harmonize with *Rom. 4. 16.* *It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be made sure to all the seed, &c.*

Fifthly, You say that this blessing that is come on them in Christ, that is, on the *Gentiles*, is no other but the Gospel Promises and Priviledges which were made to them in Christ by covenant, *Gal. 3. 14, 17.*

Reply. This I readily grant you, but it did not come on all the *Gentiles*, but such only as were Christs, as I have shewed you already; nor did it come on all the *Jews*, but on such of them as were Christs, and if so, then it was never put into that covenant in which the natural seed stood, considered as such; for if it had, they would have enjoyed the benefit of it. And this anticipates your conclusion, which is this, that the covenant that God made with *Abraham*, which was signed with circumcision, is the covenant of Grace; for had that been the covenant into which these blessings were put, they should have come on all the natural seed, who were the subjects thereof.

Sixthly, You say, it was no other than the covenant of grace into which the *Jews* entered, *Deut. 29. 12, 13.* *That he may establish thee to be a people, and that he may be to thee a God.* And these words are used by the Prophet to express the covenant of Grace as distinct from the ceremonies of the Law, *Jer. 7. 22, 23.*

Reply. As to the 29th. of *Deut.* I have spoken already, and if I must remind you of what I said, then compare 25. with *Jer.* 31. 32, 33. and you may see it's distinct from the covenant of Grace; it was the covenant God made with them, when he brought them up out of *Egypt*, and that was not the covenant of Grace: This Note of distinction between the covenant *Deut.* 29. and the covenant of Grace, I gave you in my last; but you have not made a word of Reply; and whereas you say that *Jer.* doth distinguish the ceremonies of the Law from the covenant of Grace, there is not one word of the covenant of Grace in the place you have quoted; but I suppose you gather it from these words, *Obey my voice, and I will be your God*; but this is no more than God promised to the natural seed, by virtue of the peculiar covenant, in the same terms; this proves not that covenant to be the covenant of Grace: God here makes himself over upon Conditional Terms, but the covenant of Grace is absolute; obedience to God is the fruit of our relation by virtue of the covenant of Grace, not the Condition: This is no more than God promised, *Gen.* 17. 8. Also, *I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, this whole land wherein thou art a stranger, and I will be their God.*

This Covenant contained temporal blessings only, and the most of them hung on conditions too, *Deut.* 28. Now for God to be their God by virtue of this Covenant, was but to make good the promises thereof; if they should break Covenant by their disobedience, as they might, *Gen.* 17. 14. and as they did, *Jer.* 31. 32. God was at liberty to give them a bill of divorce, as he threatned in the place you last quoted, *Jer.* 7. 28, 29. *Thou shalt say unto them, this is a Nation that obeyeth not the voice*

of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction; truth is perished and cut off from their mouth: Cut off thy hair, O Jerusalem, take up a lamentation, for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. And is this the covenant of Grace, the subjects of which may be forsaken? and are these the subjects of the covenant of grace, that the Lord calls the generation of his wrath, and whose Carcasses he threatens shall be meat for the fowls of the Air? These are curses, and not New-covenant blessings, that were to fall upon them, *Hos. 1. 7.* Call his name Loammi, for ye are not my people, neither will I be your God: And yet he was once their God by vertue of this peculiar covenant; but when God makes himself over unto a people by vertue of the covenant of Grace, he is their God for ever, *Jer. 32. 40.*

Seventhly, You say, if this be not the covenant of Grace, then the covenant of Grace was not established under the Law.

Reply. It does not follow that the covenant of Grace was not established under the Law, if this be denied to be the covenant of Grace; the one may be denied, the other granted: What I have written already, shews that I own the covenant of Grace to be from the beginning, to be established with Abraham and his spiritual seed, *Gen. 17. 7.* and to be confirmed, *Gen. 22. 18.* In the next place you come to examine the differences that I laid down between this covenant and the covenant of Grace.

SECT. I.

THE first you say is this, That the covenant that God made with the Jews, was a Covenant that might be broken, that it contained cur-

ses as well as blessings, that might fall on the subjects thereof without a sanctified use of them; but the covenant of Grace can't be broken, and that it contains only blessings. This you say is a strange property of the covenant of Grace, that it cannot be broken, and that there had need be more proof to it than my bare say so, to perswade any reasonable man to believe it.

Reply. You had more than my bare say so to prove it, if you would but have cast your eye upon it; and I think more than you can answer, because you slipt it without a reply. I gave you for the proof of it, *Jer. 32. 40.* *I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will never turn away from them to do them good, and I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* If God will never turn away from the subjects of this covenant to do them good, then he will always stand by them to do them good, and to do them all the good that they need, or can expect from a God of Grace and Mercy; and if he will put his fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from him, then let any rational man tell me how this covenant can be broken. But seeing there wants so much proof to a truth so plain and clear, I shall endeavour to put it beyond dispute.

First, It cannot be broken on Gods part, *Heb. 6. 17, 18.* *God willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of his promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by his Oath: That by two immutable things by which it was impossible for God to lye, they that had fled to lay hold on the Hope set before them might have strong consolation.* The Word is unchangeable, the Oath is unchangeable, and it's impossible for God to lye, that hath promised, that in *Abraham's seed all the Nations in the earth should be blessed,*

Gal.

Gal. 3. 17. *And this I say, that the Covenant that was before confirmed of God in Christ, the Law that was four hundred and thirty Years after could not disannul, that it should make the Promise of none effect. Psalm 89. 28, 29, &c. My Mercy will I keep for him for evermore, (that is, Christ) and my Covenant shall stand fast with him; if his Children break my Law, and walk not in my Statutes, I will visit their Iniquities with the Rod, and their Sin with Stripes; but my loving-kindness will I not take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail: My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my Lips. If God will not take his Love from him, then not from them that are one with him: If his Covenant shall stand fast with him for evermore, then with them that are one with him by vertue of the same Covenant. But you will say, Will not God break his Covenant, when his Children break his Laws? I answer, No, he will correct them, but not disinherit them. The breach of Gods Laws was a breach of that Covenant wherein the natural Seed stood, considered as such, but not the breach of the Covenant of Grace; wherein the Children of Christ stands, Heb. 9. 17. *A Testament is of force when Men are dead, otherwise it's of no force at all while the Testator liveth: The Testator being dead, the Testament can't be altered; not one Name of those that were written in the Lambs Book of Life can be blotted out, nor one Legacy altered. If it be but a mans Covenant, when it is confirmed, no man disannuleth, or addeth thereunto. This the Apostle bringeth to shew, how unalterable the Covenant of Grace is, being confirmed by the Death of the Testator.**

Secondly, It can't be broken by the Subjects thereof: Once in the Covenant of Grace, and for ever.

First, All their Sins are pardoned, upon the satisfaction made by Christ their Surety, Col. 2. 13, 14. *And you who were dead in your Sins, and the Uncircumcision of your Flesh, hath he quickened together with Christ, having forgiven you all sins, blotting out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us; that was contrary to us, taking it out of the way, and nailing it unto the Cross.* This hand-writing was the Moral Law, which was written and engraven in Stone, which the Apostle calls *The Ministration of Death, that was written and engraven in Stone*, 2 Cor. 3. 7. and which he there telleth you is done away, (I do not say that the Moral Law is done away in respect of the Precept thereof, that it should not be a rule of Life to Believers, for I acknowledge that such are still under the ruling Power thereof, as well as others; this I put down to prevent mistakes) but in respect of the Curse thereof: *He hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us*, Gal. 3. 13. That this was the Moral Law, appears, First, In that he speaks to the *Gentiles* that were not under the Ceremonial Law. Secondly, In that it was a Law that was against us, that it was contrary to us, it was that Law by which we were condemned, by which we were bound over to wrath; the Debt being paid by a Surety, Justice it self pleads the discharge of the Principle, gives up the Bond immediately, there is no more Charge, Action or Molestation, of or against the Principle; insomuch that there is a challenge made, Rom. 8. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? it's God that justifieth; who shall condemn? it's Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again.* He dates their discharge from the time of Christ's Oblation: Now the Debt paid was not

not this or that particular Sin satisfied for, but this and that, as Sins past, present, and to come.

First, It was the design of Christ in dying to redeem from all Sin, *Tit. 2. 14. Who gave himself for us, that he might, &c.* Either Christ hath done what he gave himself to do, or he hath not: If he hath, then are they redeemed from all Iniquity; if he hath not, it must be for want of Merit in his Blood; and that were blasphemy to assert.

Secondly, What Christ gave himself to do, that he did, *Heb. 10. 14. By one oblation he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified*: This Perfection consists in the pardon of Sin; and the Word for ever shews it to be all Sin, past, present, and to come: Now where Remission of these is, there is no more sacrifice for Sin. Either Sin is remitted upon the oblation of Christ, or it is not; if it be not, it will never be remitted; for without shedding of Blood there is no Remission.

Thirdly, Those that are redeemed are eternally redeemed, never to come into Condemnation more, *Heb. 9. 12. He entered once into the holy place, having obtained for us eternal Redemption*: And it is with respect to the Consummation of the new Covenant by the Death of Christ, that God is said to be merciful to their unrighteousness, and to remember their Sins no more. Now then, if the Sins of those that have an interest in this Covenant are all pardoned, how can the subjects thereof break it? if this Covenant be broken, it must be by Sin, but pardoned Sin cannot break it.

Secondly, If the Sins of those that have an interest in this Covenant may break it, who then shall

shall remain interested in it? *In many things we offend all*: I do not judge that you do distinguish between Mortal and Venial Sins, or that there is any such distinction to be made; Sin as Sin deserves Death.

Thirdly, God hath promised to put his fear into the Hearts of the Subjects of this Covenant, that they shall not depart from, (that is) they shall not totally and finally depart from him: So that now I hope that my assertion stands good, that the Covenant of Grace can't be broken; and if so, then its a good note to distinguish it by; from the Covenant into which the natural Seed were taken, (considered as such) which was a Covenant that might be broken, and that was broken.

Secondly, You say, though God will not fail to afford us Grace, sufficiently to enable us to keep his Covenant, *Jer. 32. 40.* yet it is too possible for us, through our own default, to receive his Grace in vain.

Reply. If God will never turn away from us to do us good, but will put his fear into our Hearts, that we shall not depart from him, then it is not possible for us to receive his Grace in vain; and if you intend for the proof of your Assertion, *2 Cor. 6. 1.* that will be no evidence for you in this matter: It's not the infusion of Grace, but the Doctrine of Grace that is there intended, as appears by the Coherence, and that I grant may be received in vain; and is, when it is received into the Head, but not into the Heart; when it is received in the Notion, but not in the Life and Power thereof.

Thirdly, You say, God doth not compel us to be good; nor to obey any of his Laws, without our own endeavour.

Reply.

Reply. God doth not compel us against our Will, I grant; that is not the way that God taketh; but he doth by a Work of Regeneration alter and change our Will; and makes us of unwilling to be willing, *Psalms 110. 3. Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power:* This New-Covenant Promise reacheth all the Subjects thereof.

Secondly, The Heart must be changed by the infusion of new Principles, before we can heartily endeavour, or can please God in what we do, *Rom. 8. 7. The carnal Mind is enmity against God, and is not subject unto the Law of God, neither indeed can be:* Now this change of the Heart is a New-Covenant Blessing, which all the Subjects thereof shall in time enjoy, *Ezek. 36. 26. A new Heart also will I give unto you, &c.* This Promise is made to all the spiritual Israel, and to them only, *Heb. 8. 10, 11. This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, I will write my Law in their Hearts, &c.* an inseparable Companion of which is the pardon of all their Sins, *ver. 34.*

Fourthly, You say, we may through our own perverse Wills refuse his Counsel, and abuse his Grace, *Prov. 1. 24, 28, 29.*

Reply. I grant where the Gospel is afforded, Sinners as Sinners have a call to come to Jesus Christ; and I do not scruple to say, it is a gracious call, which yet may be abused by the most of those that are within the sound thereof: *Many are called, but few are chosen.* Yet there is not one of the Subjects of this Covenant that shall go without an Effectual Call, *Rom. 8. 29.* There is not one link of that golden Chain that shall ever fail, *John 10. 16. And other Sheep I have, that are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and there shall be*

be one Shepherd, and one Fold. John 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me.*

Fifthly, You say, that there are too many that forsake their own Mercy, and transgress the Gospel to their own Destruction.

Reply. A Gospel Call is their own Mercy: *Israel* had a day; *If thou hadst known in this thy day*; it was their own day; the great Gospel-command hath been, and is transgressed, and men shall be damned for that Transgression. You bring a great many Scriptures here, to prove that the Gospel Covenant may be broken, and that it threatens a curse for the breach thereof; I say, you bring a great many Scriptures, such as these, to prove this, 2 *Thess.* 1. 8. *He shall come in flaming Fire, rendering vengeance on them that know not God, nor obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* But do you look on these to be the subjects of the Covenant of Grace? sure I am, it is not your bare say so will clear it; there is only one Text that need to be considered, and that is *Heb.* 10. 28, 29. *And have troden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite to the Spirit of Grace.*

Reply. This can't be taken of real Sanctification, but of Sanctification in appearance, unless we interfere with other Scriptures, *Phil.* 1. 6. *He that hath begun a good work in you, will not cease to perfect the same, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Where Christ begins a work of Sanctification, he will finish it; if he hath given the Soul living water, it shall be in him a Well of Water, springing up to Everlasting Life: And if such as have made a Profession, and seemed to be sanctified, do totally and finally fall away, it may be said of them,

them, as the Apostle speaks, *They are gone out from us, but they were not all of us*; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out from us, that it might be manifest that they were not all of us: But who were they then? I answer, the Children of Hagar, not of Sarah; the Sons of the Bond-woman, not of the Free.

You Query, Do not these Scriptures prove, that the Covenant of Grace may be broken, and that it threatens a curse for the breach thereof?

Reply. They prove that the commands of the Gospel may be transgressed by wicked men, and that they shall be damned for that Transgression; but they do not prove, that the Covenant may be broken by the subjects thereof.

Seventhly, You Query, If the Covenant may not be broken, how can any Man be damned that professes the Gospel, though he walk contrary to that Profession, seeing he is condemned for nothing, but for breaking of the Gospel-Covenant?

Reply. I would ask again, How those may be said to break the Covenant, that never had an interest in it? and how it appears that such as are damned had ever an interest in the Covenant of Grace? they were none of Christs Sheep; for if they had, they should have heard Christ's Voice, and have followed him, and should have had Eternal Life, *John 10. 27, 28. My Sheep hear my Voice, and I give to them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, &c.* And if they are none of Christ's, then they are none of Abraham's Seed, and so not heirs according to Promise.

Secondly, How doth it appear, that wicked men are condemned for breaking of this Covenant? Where does the Scripture say, that their Condemnation is for the breach of the Covenant of Grace? That of the *Hebrews* will not reach it:

Men

Men may trample under foot the Blood of the Covenant, by despising of Jesus Christ, and by rejecting of him, that had never an interest in him, and may have the denomination of sanctified ones, that were never really sanctified. All the Churches of Christ are stiled Saints, professing themselves such, though there are Hypocrites among them: And if men do totally and finally fall from their Profession, its an evident demonstration that they were never really sanctified, that they were never regenerated, never born of God, nor had ever an interest in the Covenant of Grace.

First, That they were never born of God, 1 John 3. 9. *He that is born of God doth not commit Sin, neither can he, for his Seed remaineth in him.* He can't yield the full Consent of his Will, nor Sin with constant allowance; *It's the thing that I would not, that I do*; saith the Apostle, Rom. 7. If men Sin willingly after they have received the Knowledge of the Truth, as these do, Heb. 10. its a sure sign that they were never born of God, and if they were never born of God, they were never really sanctified.

Secondly, Its a sure sign that they had never an interest in the Covenant of Grace: Such as have an interest in this Covenant, are secured by the Promises thereof from total and final Apostacy, Jer. 32. 40. John 10. 27, 28, 29. Mat. 16. 18. *Upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*: Its the House that's built upon the Sand that falls, not the House that's built upon the Rock; every true Believer is built upon this Rock.

S E C T. II.

YOU say, the second difference that I make between these two Covenants is this, that into which the *Jews* entred with their Seed was conditional, but the Covenant of Grace is absolute. Here you grant the former, and deny the latter. You say the Covenant of Grace is conditional:

Reply. These Terms I suppose are inconsistent; if it be the Covenant of Grace, then its not conditional; if it be conditional, then its not the Covenant of Grace, *Rom. 11. 6.* *If it be of Grace, then it's no more of Works, otherwise Grace is no more Grace; and if it be of Works, then it's no more of Grace, otherwise Works are no more Works:* So that unless the Nature of these two are changed, Grace and Works, as Conditions, will not stand together.

Secondly, You say, a Covenant necessarily implies a mutual Obligation; and as God in the Covenant promiseth blessings on his part, so he requires Conditions on our part, in order to obtain those blessings.

Reply. First, I deny that a mutual Obligation is essential to a Covenant, as such, though it may be to some Covenants; a Covenant may be made without it, *Gen. 9.* God made a Covenant with all Flesh, as well irrational as rational, the Token of which Covenant you have seen. This Covenant is absolute, there could be no Condition required of, nor performed by irrational Creatures, in order to obtain the Blessings; and should rational Creatures be as wicked, yea, more wicked then they were before the Flood, yet has the

Lord

Lord bound himself by this Covenant, that he will drown the World no more. Again, we have the Lords Covenant with the Day, and with the Night, *Jer. 33. 20.* That they should continue for ever in their season; but where the mutual obligation lies, I do not know.

Secondly, A Covenant may be made between two, for, and in behalf of others, wherein they mutually engage to each other; as that between *Laban and Jacob*, in behalf of *Laban's Daughters*, *Gen. 31. 5.* which Covenant was absolute with respect to the Subjects thereof, that *Jacob* should not abuse them, nor take other Wives to them. Such is the Covenant of Grace, it was transacted between the Father and the Son, for, and in behalf of the Elect, *Isa. 49.* from 1, to 11. wherein there is a mutual engagement between the Father and the Son, both for Redemption, Vocation, and Glorification, *Tit. 1. 2.* *In hopes of Eternal Life, which God that cannot lye promised before the World was:* Whom could this Promise be made to but Christ, and for whom could it be made but the Elect? How could *Paul* have bottomed his Hopes on the Promise, if he had not had an Interest in it? *2 Tim. 1. 9.* *Who hath saved us, and called us, not according to our Works, but according to his own purpose and Grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the World was:* This Grace of God, which was the original cause of all good, was made over to a peculiar People, before the Creation of the World, which Gift was free and absolute; it was given to all those, and only those, who in time are saved and called.

Thirdly, You say, that God requireth Conditions to be performed by us, in order to obtain his Blessings.

Reply.

Reply. That there are duties required of the Subjects of this Covenant, I grant; that these are Conditions, I deny; for whatever God requires of the Subjects of this Covenant, he hath promised to give them a Heart to perform, and that must be made good on Gods part, antecedent to any thing done by them, that is any way pleasing unto God: *Without Faith it's impossible to please God*; and Faith they have not till God gives them a new Heart; *So then they that are in the Flesh cannot please God*, Rom. 8. 8. I say, what God requires of them, he hath promised to give them an Heart to do, Ezek. 36. 26, 27.

Secondly, If God requires Conditions of us, then these Conditions must be performed, antecedent to the receiving of the Blessings; and who then shall ever be the better for them, who hath given to God first?

Thirdly, A new Heart is one of God's blessings, Ezek. 36. 26. A Will to do what God requires is one of Gods Blessings, Psalm 110. 3. and what can be performed acceptable unto God, before these Blessings are given out?

Fourthly, When God gives out these Blessings, he doth not bestow them on us for what we have done, Tit. 3. 5. nor yet according to what we have done, 2 Tim. 1. 9.

Fourthly, You say, the Covenant on Gods part hath this Seal; *the Lord knoweth who are his*, he will own and reward them that are faithful to him.

Reply. That God will own and reward them that are faithful, I grant to be a great Truth, but I can't think it's the genuine Sense of this Text; the Text tells you, *The Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the Lord knoweth who are*

are his : This I look upon to be his decree of Election, which was his Foundation-Act of Grace, that standeth sure, and the Seal is his Knowledge of them ; he knoweth whom he hath chosen, and he will own them, stand by them, and preserve them in an apostatizing-time. And though *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, who once seemed as Stars of the greatest magnitude, had by their Apostacy discovered themselves to be but Comets, yet such as God had chosen should be preserved.

Fifthly, You say, that we on our part set to our Seal, and oblige our selves to depart from Iniquity.

Reply. If you cast your Eye again on the Text, you may see that it's the Lord that obligeth us to depart from Iniquity ; its not historical, but preceptive ; *And let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity.*

Sixthly, You say, that place *Jer. 31. 33.* expressly declares the Condition of the new Covenant, both on Gods part and ours too, that he will be our God, and we shall be his People.

Reply. I think a man must be very quick-sighted, that can espy a Condition in a Text that is wholly promissory ; he must needs be a very great Artist, that can turn a Priviledge into a Condition ; *I will be their God, and they shall be my People* ; its a choice Promise, and holds out the Priviledge of the Subjects thereof ; you may as well make the next Words a Condition as these ; *They shall all know me, from the greatest to the least* ; and if you do, by the People of God understand such as are his by Vocation, then their call is here promised, they shall be my People ; but how shall this be effected ? the Text tells you ; *I will write my Law in their Hearts, and put it in their inward parts* : This is that that

doth

both dispose them to answer a Gospel-call ; this is absolutely promised, and what farther Assistance may be needed shall not be wanting ; those that God loved with an everlasting love he will draw unto Christ with cords of Love, he hath engaged to afford them the Assistance of his Spirit to enable them to answer a Gospel-call.

Seventhly, You say, that to approve our selves to be the people of God, we must not only believe his Promises, but obey his Will, and walk in his ways.

Reply. Must all these be done antecedent to our relation, and as conditions of our relation to God ? that all these are matter of duty, and that they are the means by which we approve our selves to be the people of God, both to our selves and others too, I grant, but that they are conditions entitling us to God, as our God, I deny. You say unless we be obedient unto God, and behave our selves as his people, he will not be our God to bless us, and to crown us with Happiness.

Reply. *First*, God must bless us with a principle of Obedience, before we can yield an act of Obedience ; that is, an act of sincere Obedience ; and if it be not sincere, it's neither acceptable unto God, nor spiritually profitable unto our selves. *The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject unto the Law of God, neither indeed can be* : So that an act of Obedience is not antecedent to the blessing, and therefore not a condition thereof ; and tho' obedience be antecedent to happiness, (by which I suppose you intend a Crown of Glory) yet it is not the condition of that happiness. Glory may be considered as an end following obedience, preparing, sitting for and disposing to it, but not as an end depending on obedience, as a means procuring.

Eighthly, You say the great blessings of the Gospel are promised on condition of Faith, and sincere Obedience.

Reply. Here I would query, Whether Faith and sincere Obedience be not great Gospel Blessings themselves, or whether they will be found to grow in Natures Garden? must not the heart first be changed, before a man can believe, or yield sincere obedience? the essence of Faith lyeth in the act of the Understanding, and of the Will, neither of which can be put forth till the heart be renewed, the understanding can't behold Jesus Christ; *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, nor can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned*: And such a one wants a spiritual eye, *1 John 5. 1. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; to know God to be the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is the gift of Jesus Christ, John 17. 2, 3.* and this gift is bestowed on them only that are given unto Jesus Christ: And as for the act of the Will, that also is a New-covenant blessing, *Psal. 110. 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* And what is sincere Obedience but a New-Covenant-blessing also, a fruit of the free-grace of God? *Phil. 2. 13. It's God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure*: I doubt not but faith and sincere obedience may be called great blessings of the Gospel as well as others, and what I pray are the conditions on which these are bestowed?

Ninthly, You bring three places to prove this, that Faith and Obedience are the conditions on which the great blessings of the Gospel are given out, *Acts 10. 43. He that believeth shall receive remission of sins.*

Reply. It's one thing for sins to be remitted, and another

another thing for a person to receive remission. Sin was remitted from the time of Christ's oblation, (as I shewed you in the preceeding head) remission of sin lyes in our reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses*; then was the Attonement made, but we receive the Attonement when we believe, Rom. 5. 11. *By whom also we have now received the Attonement*: Our receiving remission is not the condition of our pardon, that was procured by Christ long before; that of Prov. 28. 18. shews us the way in which God will be found; *He that confesseth his sin, and forsaketh it, shall find mercy*. God doth not set his grace and mercy to sale, he pardoneth freely; repentance is not the condition of pardon, but the way to attain the sence thereof. The other Scripture, 1 John 2. 7. is plainly an evidence, not a condition; *He that doth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous*.

Tenthly, You say, without obedience we shall never enter into happinefs; *Without holiness none shall see the Lord*.

Reply. This is readily granted, yet is not the holiness and obedience of sanctified ones the condition of their interest in the covenant, but the fruit thereof.

Eleventhly, You say, that God will not pardon sins while we continue impenitent; *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men*, Rom. 1. 18.

Reply. That the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, is granted, and the greatest wrath is revealed against the sins of those that are the subjects of this covenant, for whom Jesus Christ stood a surety: God laid all their sins upon Christ, Isa. 53. 6. and poured out all that wrath upon Christ that

was due to them, *verse 4.* Surely he hath born our griefs, he hath carried our sorrows, that which we should have born and carried; he was wounded for our transgressions, and by his stripes are we healed; all this wrath was born upon the account of the subjects of this covenant, *verse 8.* for the transgressions of my people was he stricken. Jesus Christ in bearing this wrath for us hath born it from us, *1 Thes. 1.*

10. Even Jesus who hath delivered us from the wrath to come: When Christ was made a curse for us, then did he redeem us from the curse, in which redemption there is remission; then did he consummate that New-Covenant, *Heb. 8.* at which time God pardoned all the sins of the subjects thereof; when the Testator was dead, the Testament was of force, and from that time there is a challenge made, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? it's God that justifies, &c. Rom. 8. 33.*

Twelfthly, You say, if this Doctrine were generally embraced, and put in practice, it would destroy the Christian Religion.

Reply. I take this to be a hasty conclusion, which the Premises will not afford; I know no one duty destroyed by it, neither Faith nor Repentance, nor any act of Obedience, either to moral or Evangelical Precepts; there is enough for us to do, though not as conditions; though we are not bound to work for life, yet is there work enough to be done from life, and our capacity to obey where God commands is a fruit of our interest; a new heart and a new spirit, *Ezek. 36.* is a fruit of our interest; the spirit enabling us to pray is a fruit of our relation to God, *Gal. 4. 5.* Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying *Abba, Father.* The Doctrine of the freeness and absoluteness of this Covenant never opened a

Gap to licentiousness to a gracious soul, though possibly others may abuse it as they do the Scriptures, wresting them to their own destruction. I know no Doctrine that is more binding to a gracious soul than the Doctrine of Free-Grace is; *It teacheth him to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World, Tit. 2. 11.*

SECT. III.

YOU say, the the third difference that I make between these two Covenant is this, that the one contains temporal blessings, the other spiritual; your Answer to this is, that though this Covenant that the *Jews* were under with their seed, contained a great many temporal blessings, yet there were some spiritual blessings, for God promised to *circumcise their hearts, and the hearts of their children, Deut. 30. 6. Eph. 1. 19, 20.* God promiseth to give them *One heart, and to take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and to give them an heart of flesh, that they should walk in his statutes, and that he would be their God; and they should be his people.*

Reply. I suppose my Argument yet stands good, and that the same Answer may serve which I have given already; if this had been a branch of that covenant in which the natural seed stood, considered as such, *Deut. 29.* then should they all have enjoyed the benefit thereof. God makes no promise, but he performs it too.

Secondly, You say that many of them refused to perform the conditions on which these promises were made, and therefore they went without the benefit thereof.

Reply. First, You do not declare what those

conditions were, nor do I know what conditions may be performed antecedent to a new heart: If you say it was sincere obedience, which is the likeliest to be pitched upon, there lies the Proposal, *Deut. 30. 2. If thou shalt return, and obey the voice of the Lord, according to all that I command thee, thou and thy children, with all thy heart and with all thy soul:* Is this the condition? if it be, then were they under an impossibility to perform it; this can't be done without heart-circumcision, antecedent thereunto: *The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject unto the law of God, neither indeed can be,* Rom. 8. 7. Men can't obey the law of God till God write his law in their hearts, they can't observe his judgments till he puts his spirit within them, so that heart-circumcision that follows sincere obedience can't be understood of the first work of sanctification, but of a farther carrying on of the work thereof.

Secondly, If you read the Book of the covenant, *Exod. 21, 22, 23. Chapters.* You will find no such promise there; that these Chapters contained the book of the Covenant, appears, *Exod. 24. 8.* if you read the 28th. of *Deut.* where you have a list of all the blessings of this covenant, you will find no such promise there, and yet *Moses* tells them *Chap. 29. 1.* These are the Words of the covenant that the Lord commanded him to make with them; and in the 25 verse. you may see that this was the Covenant the Lord made with them when they came out of *Egypt*; by which note its distinguished from the covenant into which heart-circumcision was put, *Jer. 31, 32, 33.* and as for that promise that God made of a heart to walk in his statutes, *Ezek. 11. 19, 20.* it was made to a peculiar people that God had among the *Jews*, or to the spiritual seed:

If one Scripture may help to interpret another, *Fer. 24.* This promise was made to the good figs, not to the evil ; there is a fearful curse threatened against them ; it was the same captivity that *Ezekiel* relates to.

SECT. IV.

YOU say, the fourth Difference that I make between these two covenants, is in respect of the subjects : The subjects of the one being the natural seed of *Abraham*, considered as such, the subjects of the other being the spiritual seed, true Members of Christ, really regenerate and holy : But this exposition of the Members of Christ is your own, and not mine : To this you say, that the difference between the Covenant of Grace under the Law, and under the Gospel, is not so great as to make them different Covenants.

Reply. I know no difference in the Covenant of Grace then and now, nor did I endeavour to make any, I only distinguish the Covenant of Grace from that Covenant that the natural seed were in, considered as such.

Secondly, You say, that all that were admitted into the Church of the *Jews*, and professed that religion, were in the covenant of Grace ; and all that are admitted into the Church of Christ, and profess that religion that he hath taught, are in the covenant of Grace, under the Evangelical Administration ; and much to this purpose you have brought, without one Text of Scripture to prove it, therefore I shall let it pass till I come to your Scriptures.

Thirdly, You say, there are many promises of Pardon and Salvation, which are special parts

of the Gospel-Covenant made to the wicked, on condition of repentance, as *Isa. 55. 7. Ezek. 18. 29.*

Reply. First, The offer of the promise is to all where the Gospel comes, but its one thing to have the offer, and another thing to have an interest in the promise.

Secondly, The Promises, though offered unto all, yet are made to none but the spiritual seed; to *Abraham* and his seed were the promises made; he saith not to seeds, as of many, but unto thy seed, as of one, which is *Christ, Gal. 3. 16.*

Fourthly, You say, that those of the natural seed that were not the Children of God, *Rom. 9.* were such as rejected Christ, and sought Justification by the works of the Law.

Reply. I grant they rejected Christ, but this Answer is besides the Question; the Question is, Whether they had an interest in the promise? they were the Children of *Abraham*, but not the Children of the Promise, which were accounted for the Seed.

Secondly, How came they to reject Christ? Was it not because they had no Interest in the Promise, no Relation unto Jesus Christ? I suppose Christ bottoms it there, *John 10. 26. Ye believe not, because ye are not my Sheep, as I said unto you.* The Covenant of Grace was made with *Israel, Jer. 31. 33.* But all are not *Israel* that are of *Israel*; Not as though the Word of God has taken none effect: Those to whom God hath promised Grace, to them he gives it; but that was to *Israel*, not all of *Israel*. I mentioned *Jacob* and *Esau* too, the one loved, and the other hated; and put the Question, Whether a Person hated of God, might be considered a subject of the Covenant of Grace? I like.

likewise mentioned *Gal. 3. 16, 29.* *If ye be Christs,* then are ye *Abrahams Seed,* and Heirs according to Promise: I shewed you, that *Abraham* had but two Seeds, a natural and a spiritual Seed; that the *Gentiles* are not his natural Seed, nor can they be known to be his spiritual Seed, till they walk in the steps of *Abraham's* Faith; but there is no reply to all this.

First, You Query, if formal Professors have no Interest in the Covenant of Grace, how then can they be said to transgress it?

Reply. I know not where it's so said, though I deny not but Gospel-laws are broken by them.

Secondly, You Query, how they could have any hope of Mercy and Salvation, in case they repent, if they have no Interest in the Covenant?

Reply. I never denied, that those have an Interest in the Covenant, that do in time come truly to repent; that which I deny, is, that those which live and die impenitently had ever an Interest in the Covenant of Grace.

Thirdly, You Query, if none have an Interest in the Covenant but the spiritual Seed of *Abraham,* such as are truly regenerated, then how could any upon sure grounds be admitted into the Church by Baptism?

Reply. I know none but such as are for Infant-Baptism, that do make Interest in the Covenant the ground thereof, nor any ground they have so to do as yet, though you have written so many Lines about it. We say, a true Faith gives the Subject a right to challenge it, a Profession of that Faith gives a call to the Administrator to administer it, and his Authority so to do is from the Commission, *Mat. 28.*

Secondly, I deny that ever I said, that none but those

those that are truly regenerate are the subjects of the Covenant, (that is, those to whom the Promises are made) and now that I may prevent this mistake for the future, I shall shew you, who they are that I do own to be the Subjects of this Covenant.

The Subjects of the Covenant of Grace are the Elect of God, that are given unto Jesus Christ; and here I shall premise two things: *First*, That there are an Elect People, a Particular People, that God hath chosen in Christ out of the Mass of Mankind, before the Foundation of the World, unto Salvation as the end, and to Sanctification as the means.

First, They are chosen to Salvation as the end, 2 Theff. 2. 13. *God hath chosen you to Salvation from the beginning*: Eph. 1. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in Love.* There are four things which lie in the very surface of the Text: *First*, This choice is of particular Persons, *Paul* and the *Ephesians*. *Secondly*, They were chosen in Christ. *Thirdly*, This choice was before the Foundation of the World. *Fourthly*, It was that they should be Holy, not upon a foresight that they would be Holy. Holiness is an effect of Election, not the cause.

Secondly, These Elect were given unto Christ, John 17. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them unto me*: This Gift of the Father to the Son was antecedent to the Knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ given to them by the Son, John 17. 2, 3. *That I may give Eternal Life to as many as thou hast given unto me*: Some men are the Sheep of Christ, some men are not the Sheep of Christ, when both are Unbelievers, John 10. 16. compared with the 26.

verse,

verse. I shall now prove, that these are the subjects of this Covenant.

First, It appears, in that the Blessings of this Covenant belong to them, Eph. 1. 3. *Who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him: They have a Title unto all, and in time shall enjoy all, when all others will fall short of it, Rom. 11. 5. What then Israel hath not obtained, that which it sought after, but the Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*

Secondly, It was for their sakes that Christ had his Name Jesus given to him: *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins, Mat. 1. 21. his People before they were a saved People.*

Thirdly, It was upon their account that Christ underwent all his Sufferings, John 10. 15. *I lay down my Life for the Sheep: Isa. 53. 8. For the Transgressions of my People was he stricken: He loved the Church, and gave himself for them: Eph. 5. 25. For their sakes he sanctified himself: John 17. 19. He prayed for them, he prayed not for the World, but for them that were given him of the Father; and if he prayed not for the World, I conclude he died not for the World.*

Fourthly, It appears, in that those only are the spiritual Seed of Abraham to whom the Promises were made, Gal. 3. 29. *If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise. These, and these only are the Persons that in time come to believe, John 6. 37. All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me: John 10. 16. Other Sheep I have that are not of this Fold, them also I must bring; shew me a true Believer, and I will shew you an Elect Person: So then, I conclude with you, that the regenerate are not the only sub-*

subjects of the Covenant of Grace. There were more Marks of difference that I gave you of these two Covenants, among which this was one, the Covenant of Grace was a *better Covenant, established on better Promises*. There can't be a degree of comparison where there is but one. I shewed in what respects the Promises were better, but you were pleased to pass all without a reply, and to conclude from what was written, that there was no such difference between the Covenant of Grace and that Covenant that the natural Seed were in, but that in substance it was the same, though the Premises were far enough from being cleared.

S E C T. V.

YOU come now to challenge a repeal of Childrens Church-membership, though you had it before; I told you it was then repealed, when the Covenant by which they were constituted a Church was broken, *Zach. 11. 10*. I shewed you, there was a new Commission given out after Christ was risen, according to which the Apostles were to act, *Mat. 28. 19, 20*.

Your Answer to this, is, that the Ceremonial Law is sometimes called the first and old Covenant, *Heb. 8. 7, 13*. the Jewish shadows vanished, their carnal Ordinances and Sacrifices ceas'd.

Reply. The Apostle here speaks of the Covenant it self, and not of the Ceremonial Law, as distinct from the Covenant: Though I deny not, but when the Covenant was abolished, the Ordinances were abolished too, which Ordinances were but the adjuncts of the first Covenant, distinct from the Essence, *Heb. 9. 1*. Then verily the