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The Sandy Foundation of J. Baptism
Shaken

By Hove. Collins

1695

THE
Sandy Foundation
 OF
Infant Baptism
 SHAKEN:



OR,
 An Answer to a Book, Entituled *Vindiciæ Fæderis*,
 Published by Mr. MENCE.

Whose Arguments have been weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and found too light to prove all the Children of Believers in the Covenant of Grace: And on the contrary demonstrating, that none but the Elect, and all true Believers are in that Covenant.

And is a full ANSWER to Mr. *Michael Harrison* of P's P. his Book, Entituled *Infant Baptism God's Ordinance*.

Together with a NARRATIVE, which contains the Foundation of the Controversie.

By **HERCULES COLLINS**,
 An Unworthy Servant of Christ and his Church in *Wapping*.

ברוך ידוע אשר רב אתרוב דר פתי

Διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀγαπῆς διὰ δόσεως καὶ εὐχαρίστας ὡς πλεονεξοῦν καὶ ἀλλήλοις.

To which is added a LETTER by a Private Hand, with a PREFACE and APPENDIX, containing, 1. The Pedigree of Infants Habitual-Faith. 2. The Judgment of Learned Men against it.

By **RICHARD CLARIDGE**.

LONDON, Printed for the Author, and are to be Sold by *Will. Marshall*, at the Bible in *Newgate-street*, and *John Marshall*, at the Bible over against the *Spread-Eagle-Inn* in *Gracious-street*, near *Cornhill*. 1695.

THE
P R E F A C E,
To all the Faithful in CHRIST JESUS.

Dearly Beloved in the LORD!

IT is the Earnest Entreaty of the Apostle, that the Saints would walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith they are called; with all Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-suffering, forbearing one another in Love: Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, Eph. 4. 1, 2, 3. And I would make it mine to all the Followers of the Lamb, that they would imitate him in Meekness and Gentleness; and putting away all Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, Evil Speaking, with all Malice, be kind one to another, speak every Man Truth with his Neighbour, and walk in Love, as Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour, Eph. 5. 2. For tho' our Understandings vary about some things, wherein we have not received an equal measure of Light, and which are not of the same Nature with Faith, Love and Holiness; yet agreeing in the great and fundamental Truths of the Gospel, let us love one another, as Children of the same Heavenly Father, tho' of different Complexions and Statures. That which renders Christianity (as one well says) truly beautiful and amiable in the eyes of Beholders, is, that it teaches the Professors thereof, to love one another with a pure Heart fervently, tho' under different Persuasions, as to modes of Divine Worship and Discipline; that their Hearts are larger to receive one anothers Persons, then their Heads are to conceive one anothers Notions. Love is a prime Evangelical Vertue, commanded by Christ to all his Disciples, A New Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another, Joh. 13. 34. Christianity is an empty Name without it. That Man who fails in love, fails in the principal part of Religion; for true Religion is, Scientia affectiva, non speculativa, a loving of God, and our Neighbour as our selves, not the bare Theory of the Gospel. And our Blessed Lord not only enjoyn'd it his Disciples, but hath made it their Characteristical Badge of Discrimination from others, By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love to one another, Joh. 13. 35. The Words are emphatically spoken, *Ev tñs for ðñ tñs*, saith Brugenis, By this as your proper Symbol or Cognizance, ye shall be known to be my followers.

Melius Inquirend. p. 211.

The PREFACE.

lowers. The Disciples (saith Grotius upon the place) of the Jewish Doctors, were distinguished by some received Sayings and Traditions, and those of John the Baptist by their austere Lives and Fastings: And the Disciples of Christ should be known by imitating their Master, namely, by an extraordinary and reciprocal Affection. The Primitive Believers were famous for this Divine Quality, being of one Heart and one Soul, Acts 4. 32. Tertullian in his Apolog. says, *No-bis notam incurrit apud quosdam, vide, inquit, ut invicem se diligent. It is a mark set upon us by some Heathen, behold, how the Christians love one another!* So Octavius in Minucius Faelix tells Cæcilius the Heathen, *Mutuo, quod doletis, amore diligimus, &c. We love with mutual Love, which is your Trouble, because we know not what it is to hate; we call Brethren, for which you envy us, because we are all Children of one God the Father, Partakers of the same Faith, and Coheirs of the same Hope.* Julian the Apostate in his Letter to Arsacius the Pagan High-Priest of Galatia, gives this Testimony of the Christians, whom he scornfully calls Galilæans, that they gave up themselves to Humanity and Kindness. And Lucian that Atheistical Scoffer at Religion, observes that the Christians Master had instill'd the great Principle of Love into them. But alas! what would those Christians say, if they saw our Days, wherein this Divine and Amicable Vertue is almost banisht from among Men, that profess to be under the Noblest Institution in the World? Pardon this Warmth, (my Dear Brethren!) for 'tis Love I am pleading for, and the woful decays thereof that I write against; Love is a Fruit of the Holy Spirit, the special Livery of the Children of God; 'tis impossible to be a true Believer without it, for the right Faith worketh by Love, Gal. 5. 6. But Hatred, Variance, Wrath, Strife, Envyings, are works of the Flesh, Gal. 5. 20, 21. Where Love is, God is, for God is Love, 1 Joh. 4. 8. And he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him, v. 16. But where Strife and Division are, God is not; for he is not the Author of Contention, but of Peace. 'Love (saith one) is not an Appurtenance of my Religion, but my Religion it self; Love is the End of Faith, and Faith is but the Bottoms to kin-dle Love; Love is the fulfilling of all the Law; the End of the Gospel; the Na-ture and Mark of Christs Disciples; the Divine Nature; the Summe of Ho-liness to the Lord; the proper Note by which to know what is the Man, and what is his State, and how far any other of his Acts are acceptable unto God: without which, if we had all Knowledge and Belief, all Gifts of Utterance and highest Profession, we were but as sounding Brasses, and as a tinkling Cymbal. And if all our Goods were given to the poor, and our Bodies to the fire, it would profit nothing. Love is our foretast of Heaven, and the perfection of it is Heaven it self, even the State and Work of Angels and of Saints in Glory. And he that is angry with me for calling Men to Love, is angry for calling them to Holiness, to God and Heaven. Holiness which is against Love, is a Contradiction: it is a de-ccitful Name which Satan putteth upon Unholiness. All Church Principles, which are against Universal Love, are against God, and Holiness, and the Churches life. And he that saith he loveth God, and hateth his Brother is a Liar.

De Vani-
tate. p.
35.

To

The PREFACE.

'To be holy without Love, is to see without Light, to live without Life. Holiness and Love to God, are but two Names for one thing. Love to God and Man are like Soul and Body, that are separated no way but by Death; but when Love is dead, and yet Religion seemeth to survive, and to be increased by it, it is lamentable to think what a Degenerate, Scandalous, Hypocritical Religion that will be, and how odious and dishonourable to God. To preach without Love, and to hear without Love, and to pray without Love, and to communicate without Love, to any that differ from you, O what a loathsome Sacrifice is it to the God of Love!' From hence it is that we have so many Rare Architects at this day, that can build Christ's House by plucking it in pieces, and raise themselves and their party a Triumphant Name, out of the Contumelies they cast upon others. Pride and Hatred have so exalted their Minds, and exulcerated their Spirits, that they openly despise all that differ from them; and that they may make themselves seem wise and good, they undervalue the real Worth of others, and reproach them for Fools and Madmen. But they who take these Methods for the aggrandizing themselves, always fail of the expected Success: for they are ever so much the less in the Judgment of good and humble Men, by how much the more they aim at Greatness by scornful Insults over their Brethren; for they proclaim themselves thereby, to be Scoffers, Revilers and professed Enemies of Love, Peace and Humility. The true way to be great is to love the Lord Jesus Christ, to be little in our own Esteem, and pitiful and courteous towards all Men. But to hate our Brethren, by rendring their Doctrine odious, and branding their persons with such black Characters as our own Pride and Passion suggest, is to tell the World we have not learnt Christ in the Truth and Love of him, are not the Men we would be taken for, but are truly deserving of that Reproach and Contempt, we pour out upon them.

Baxter's Preface to the Cure of Church-Division.

'Tis a manifest Argument we have lost our first Love, when we thus inveigh against those that dissent from us; and whosoever is guilty hereof, not only wounds his own Soul, and grieves the Hearts of the faithful, but stumbles sober Enquirers after the ways of the Lord, and exposes Religion to the Scoffs of Atheists and carnal Worldlings. The Provocations of Enemies and Solicitations of Friends, are no sufficient Pleas for Rayling and Satyr. When we are reviled, we ought not to revile again; and when persecuted, we should suffer it. The Communication of Christians should be yea, yea, and nay, nay, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrary wise blessing. Their Speech should be always seasoned with Grace, and the healing dews of Charity, Meekness and Long-suffering, should drop from their Lips, as sweet smelling Myrrh. They should not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. The more they are provoked, the more patience and moderation they should express.

But O how prone are many men to break forth into furious Outcries, and let the Reins loose to their ungovernable Passions! and that too upon very small Occasions. For when they find themselves unable to defend their Opinion by solid Argument, rather then yield themselves vanquished, they'll fall to wrangling and Calumny, that they may detain their Profelytes in Ignorance, by silencing their Opponents with noise.

The PREFACE.

noise, whose Reasons are undeniable. What concerns Mr. Mence and his Book, and how far he is culpable, I shall give no particular Judgment, only say in the general, I could heartily have wished, It had not been his. For having heard an Honourable Character of him before, and thereupon expecting something correspondent, I have been greatly troubled to see my self and others so strangely disappointed; I looked for Solidity of Argument, Strength of Reasoning, Gravity of Style, and a courteous Treating of his Opponent; but behold Fallacies instead of Arguments, Railing instead of Reasoning, Facetiousness instead of Gravity, and Tragical Declarations instead of Gospel Eloquence. I understand it is the first that ever he published, and that it may not be the last, I would intreat him to write one more, viz. A Retraction of this.

And here I would inform all the Readers of Mr. Mence's Book, that whereas he charges Mr. Collins for maintaining Infant-damning Doctrine, it is altogether a mistake; for Mr. Collins is rather inclined to think, That all dying Infants are saved by the imputed Righteousness of Christ.

And whereas he clamours against him for omitting Inherent Holiness, I cannot see any cause for it. For Mr. Collins was not speaking of the Gracious Qualifications which the Holy Spirit works in all justified and saved ones, but of the material and formal causes of Justification and Salvation. Wherein Mr. Collins does not vary from the Scriptures, which sometimes speak of Justification and Sanctification apart, tho' they are never separate in the same Subject. All who are actually justified are also sanctified, but none are saved for their inherent Holiness, but for Christs imputed Righteousness, tho' none are saved without it.

Mr. Collins's Answer is plain, but sound and weighty, he having Truth on his side, needeth no Art or Paint to set it off; and let me tell you, who ever impartially considers the two Books, Mr. Collins's true Reasoning and fair Language will soon convince him, how far the other hath deviated both from the Truth and Loveliness of the Gospel.

I close this Discourse with earnest Supplications to God, that laying aside all Wrath, Contention, and Bitterness, we may put on as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercy, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and Forgiving one another; and above all these things put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectness, Col. 3. 12, 13, 14.

Richard Claridge.

From my House in Georges-Court,
near Hicks's-Hall, the 22d. of
the 12th. Month, 1694.

The Reader is desired to amend some few ERRATA's which have been let slip, but more particularly these following, viz.

- P. 10. l. 32. 1st. col. for believing read Believers Infants.
P. 34. 1st. col. l. 36. & 2d. col. l. 31. for Habitual-Faith read Infant-Habitual-Faith.

TRUTH

TRUTH and INNOCENCY Vindicated:.

O R,

An Impartial Account of the late Proceedings between Mr. Mence and Mr. Collins, concerning the Salvation of Infants by the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness.

Intended for the Information and Satisfaction of the Godly about *Wapping*, or elsewhere.

Ingenuous Reader,

I Am to inform thee in the Year Ninety and One I published a Book, which contained my Conscientious Grounds for the Baptizing of Professed Believers only; in which Treatise there was an Indication, or an Account of one of the first Arguments for Infant-Baptism; namely, That in it the Grace and Mercy of God was given, and that it was to save an Infant in apparent Danger of imminent Death from perishing: And moreover, that it wash away Original Sin; see the *Matthæan Council*, and the Fifth Council of *Carthage*, in the Year four hundred and sixteen; which Error was about that time confirmed by the Pope and his Council. Now forasmuch as I have asserted in my Book of Baptism, page 70, 113, 114. that we know a better way to wash off Original Sin from dying Infants, namely, the Blood of Christ, and the Imputation of his Righteousness: This very passage just before mentioned, hath been the principal Cause of Difference between me, Mr. *Shute*, and Mr. *Mence*; and that because I did not add, that Infants have Faith in our Lord's Righteousness, my Opponents have drawn this Conclusion, as if it naturally followed my Position, then Infants must be Damned. Whether this be not a *non sequitur*, I leave to a judicious Consideration. And doubtless to count this Doctrine Mountebank-Divinity; that is to say, Dying Infants being saved by the Imputation of Christ's Righteous-

ness, calls for suitable Repentance: And is it not a thing unaccountable, that Mr. *Mence* hath made such a stir about Infant Habitual-Faith, and yet hath not given his Reader one solid Argument to inform his Judgment about it in his whole Book.

Moreover, because I asserted, That the Infants of Believers, as they are their fleshly Seed, are not in the Covenant of Grace, Mr. *Mence* has suggested to his Auditory, from his Pulpit, as if I held this Tenet, That the Seed of Believers are absolutely shut out of the Covenant of God; and draws this Conclusion before the People, as if it were the Emanation of my Principles, then Infants must be Damned. I suppose some *Turks* and *Pagans* would have abhorred thus to deal with Innocent and true Principles, and from true Premises draw such false and ridiculous Conclusions; and from asserting Infants being saved by Christ's Righteousness, he insinuates as if that Position denies them Sanctification, and so could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. What can be a greater Reflection upon the purifying Merits of our Blessed Saviour? can they want Sanctification that are washed in his Blood? surely No.

I did always believe Justification and Sanctification in the same subject, in Conformity to the Apostle's Doctrine, *But you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified*, &c. (1 Cor. 6. 11.) The holy Prophet *Jeremy* predicts, that the Name wherewith Christ should be called, shall be, *The Lord our Righteousness*.

zealousness; would it not be disingenuous for any to infer from these words, that he denyed Sanctification in the same Subject, because he doth not mention it; yet this my Antagonist has done by me. It hath been no Doubt with me many Years, that the Father's Election, Son's Redemption, and the Spirit's Sanctification, all savingly affect the same Subject. Concerning the Truth of the Matter of Fact mentioned none can question, if they consider that I have by me the Hand-writing of the very Person who took it as it was delivered in the Pulpit; and to anticipate any undue thought, as if it were written by one prejudiced against Mr. Mence, I do assure you he hath a very great Veneration and Respect for him, and if I am not mistaken, is his constant Auditor. Thus I have given you a fair Opportunity to consider whether my Opinion gave Mr. Mence any just ground to Preach and Print as he has done, (namely,) That my Principle inevitably excludes dear Infants out of the Kingdom of God, and that I am audaciously cruel to them, sending them by swarms into Hell, calling my Principle *Infant-destroying-matter*; and that the Darts I would strike into their Hearts and the Hearts of their Children, discovers me more to be an Inveterate Enemy than a kind Brother, as he saith in his Book. My Reader is to judge whether such Invectives are the Emanation of my Principles, or rather of a distempered Mind.

Those things aforesaid thro' my Opponents Preaching spread all about the Town, and hath dolefully rung in my Ears as I have walkt the Streets; *There goeth Mr. Collins, who holds the Damnation of Infants*; tho' probably I am larger in my Charity than he, being inclined to believe all dying Infants in the Election and Covenant of Grace, tho' secret things belong to God; so that if the good Providence of God had not prevented, my Throat might not only have been cut with a Feather, which was his own saying, but might have been more effectually done another way. I could have given too great a probability of this Matter, which would have made your Ears tingle, but that I am tender of the Honour of the Gospel, and my Opponent's Reputation, though he hath endeavoured to ruine mine. I having been thus greatly abused, it came to the Ears of my Brethren in the Ministry, who upon hearing of the same in a Christian Spirit, sent for Mr. Mence, and when he came, they re-

ceived him as a Minister of the Gospel; at which time three things he mentioned to us as his trouble: *First*, That his words were misrepresented; to which Answer was made, that they suspended the total Crediting of what was declared to them till they spake with him himself. Another thing which displeased him was our keeping an *Anniversary-day*, that is, one Day in the Year, for to preach up the Ordinance of the Gospel; it was told him, that was rather a Virtue to be commended than a just ground of complaint: Moreover, my Reader is to know, that that Practice hath been maintained by the Church between twenty and thirty Years, long before either Mr. Mence or Mr. Collins came to *Wapping*: And if this be to be Vile in the Eyes of Men, let us be yet more Vile, for I am sure God and Man in this are of differing minds. A *Third* thing offended him, was my joining Transubstantiation with Infants in Covenant, and Infants Habitual-Faith, in my Book, *The Antidote proved a Counterfeit*, page the 4th. The reason of my uniting those so allike in shape, and of so near akin, you'll hear more of hereafter in Answer unto his Book. Much Discourse there was *pro and con* between the Ministers and him. And when the Ministers desired Mr. Mence to give his Reasons why he called my Doctrine before his Congregation Mountebank-Divinity? he gave no direct Answer, but evaded it; and at his parting I told him that I expected satisfaction for several Abuses which I then mentioned unto him, which you will find contain'd in the Letter at the end of this Account.

Moreover, it was there shewed him how Unconclusive it was to infer Infants must be Damned, if they have no Habitual Faith: And further shewed him, that if Infants have habitual Faith, they must have Patience, Long-suffering and Repentance, which are all in the same Subject where Faith is. Again, he was also askt, who was the Object of an Infant's Faith? unto which he made no solid Answer. 'Tis most certain, that the Ministers Carriage to Mr. Mence deserved better from him, if he had considered that some there present came not behind him in Piety, Parts, or Learning; and some old enough to be his Father. Neither did that unchristian and unmannerly Speech become his Function, when upon two Brethrens happening to speak to-

gether

gether, he replied, *If ye intend to Bait me, deal fairly, and slip your Doggs one by one*, and afterwards boasted of it among his Friends. And whereas Mr. Mence in his Book more than twice or thrice calls me *Challenger*, and *Bold Challenger*, let me give you a plain Account of that matter: When he was with our Ministers, I sat silent for a considerable time, and being about to offer something to him concerning the matter in Debate, he interrupted me with these words, "Mr. Collins, I will dispute these Points with you at any time; unto which I replied, Sir, as soon as you please. Now I having been thus greatly wronged, as you have heard, upon the ending of my three Sermons on *Acts* the 2d. in the hearing of his Son, who writ my Discourses in Short-hand very curious and speedy: I declared then that I was willing to accept of Mr. Mence his Proposition which he made before the Ministers, to discourse the Points in Controversie, which you have in the Letter at the latter End, whether this was any more than accepting of his own Challenge, let the Reader judge.

Moreover, let me inform you further, that a little time after my first mentioning in publick that I was willing to accept of his Proposal made before the Elders, he sent me this little Line of *Latin*, i. e. *An Infantes fidelium sint temporibus Evangelij in sedere Gratia?* affirmative; which in *English* is thus, Whether the Infants of Believers in the Times of the Gospel are in the Covenant of Grace? It is affirmed. Which Question doth not take in the Terms of the Controversie; for, who ever deny'd that the Infants of Believers, viz. such as are elected, are in the Covenant of Grace? of which hereafter. Note, that which adds Pleasantness to this Passage is, that quickly after he had sent me this Line of *Latin*, it was reported, by a Minister of his own Perswasion, that Mr. Mence had sent me a *LATIN LETTER*.

And whereas Mr. Mence tells us in his Epistle, that he hath a Black Catalogue of Lyes committed to Writing: And further adds, that Lyes are our Armour of Proof, and Weapons of Defence: I would have him know, my Innocency is better Armour against such threatening Calumnies. I hope that I abhor that Practice as much, if not more than himself; he knows best who it was that reported amongst his Friends when they were together, and also apart, that when he charged me with

the Conjunction of Transubstantiation with Infants in Covenant and Infant-habitual-Faith in my Book aforesaid, before the Ministers, that I deny'd I had wrote any such thing; and it appearing I had so written, the Ministers hanged down their Heads, and were ashamed on't. That this Deserves not only the Name of an *Hyperbole*, but a great *Untruth*, as will be evidenced if any Godly Persons require it, by seven or eight Elders and Ministers, as well as by his own Friend, who was with him at the same time, being asked if he knew of any such Carriage of the Ministers, and of my denying what I had writ, he replied, I know nothing of it; neither is it very probable this should be so, when the Manuscript was read among them, before it felt the weight of the Press. And let my Reader know, I was so far from denying this thing, that when Mr. Mence took out a Script of Paper to read the matter aforesaid, that he might do it the more effectually, I took the Book out of my own Pocket, turned to the Page, and gave it him to make the most of it; for all which we have undoubted Testimony at Hand.

Now how his Conscience can digest such things as these are, I know not; but I praise God they will not go down with me, neither would I have the weight of them on my Conscience for more than I shall now mention. Oh how sad is it for a Person to endeavour to raise his own Reputation by ruining of his Neighbours Credit, in bearing false witness against him, which is so contrary to the Ninth Commandment.

And whereas Mr. Mence would have the World believe him to be a Man of a Peaceable Temper, whilst he calls me a Publick Annoyer, the head of an over-grown Schism, and a Troubler of Israel; saying, that I have put this Spot into an Inflammation, well nigh a Conflagration, and that he had lain quiet six or seven years together, until he was forced to arise, as he saith, with his Bucket to quench the flame: But indeed he hath been so far from casting Water in to quench it, that he hath been pouring on Oyl to inflame it: And therefore some thinking men judge that it had been far better if he had lain asleep still, unless he had awaked in a better Temper, and to a better Purpose. Now I would have the Reader to take notice, that if Mr. Mence had not been of a Diotrephian Spirit, and had contributed as much towards the

keeping of us in Peace as others have done, we had certainly enjoy'd our Quiet in this Spot till this day: For it is well known how chearfully I have served that Congregation, by preaching amongst them in the time of his Predecessor, the late Reverend Mr. Knight.

Finally, as I esteem Peace with God, Peace in Conscience, and Peace in the Church a Choice Jewel, which I would not exchange for many Worlds; and also knowing that the eternal Transaction between the Father and Son is called the Council of Peace, and the Covenant the Covenant of Peace, and the God of Peace, Christ the Prince of Peace; the Gospel the Gospel of Peace, and Angels the Messengers of Peace, and that Heaven is a Place of Peace: In a Word, because I know where Peace is God is, and that that Grace is essential to the Kingdom of God in the Saints, and also a glorious fruit of the Holy Spirit, as it shall be my earnest Endeavour to promote it in the Churches of Christ, so it shall be my fervent and constant Prayer, as one of Zion's Watchmen, to cry, *Peace be within thy Walls, and Prosperity within thy Palaces for ever and ever, Amen.*

A LETTER sent to Mr. Mence from Mr. Collins, wherein he requires Satisfaction for the great Abuse offered him; also signifying his Willingness to accept of his own Proposition to discourse these Points which you have mentioned in this Epistle following.

SIR,

YOU having both in Publick and Private asperst and greatly wronged me, as I have before, so now I do again call for Satisfaction.

For suggesting to your Auditors from Pulpit and elsewhere,

1. As that I held Believers Seed absolutely shut out of the Covenant of God, and so then they must be damned.

2. As if I held an Imputation of Christ's Righteousness might be to that Subject or Person where was no Sanctification nor Cleansing.

3. As if my Tenet was, that some Persons might be saved which are not in the Covenant of Grace.

4. That because I cannot put this in my Creed, that Infants have Faith, you have drawn the Conclusion, as if it were natural from the Premises, then Infants must be damned: And this hath been by you declared in your publick Meeting-Place.

5. Was it not very unfair, and contrary to the Golden Rule, when you repeated before the Ministers that Paragraph in my Book, Transubstantiation, Infants-Incovenanting, Infants Habitual-Faith, are Terms I think equally allowable, and probably equally understood among their various Professors? was it not disingenuous to repeat but part of it, and leave out the Argument and Reason why I thus spoke? viz. Because you do not by this Covenant mean the Election of Grace, therefore not one of a thousand know what you mean by it.

6. To approve a Sentence which compares those that cannot own an Antiquated or repealed Covenant in force to Antichrist, who opens his mouth to speak Blasphemy against God, his Tabernacle, his Name, and them which dwell in Heaven, calls for Repentance unto God, and as publick an Acknowledgment before men.

7. Again, for your drawing wrong Conclusions from true Premises, and then call it by the hard Name of Mountebank-Divinity.

Sir, I call for as publick Satisfaction as I have had an Aspersions; but if you shall deny it, as you have done, and rather stand upon a Vindication, I must take the best measures I can to clear my Innocency, because my Function doth oblige me to maintain a good Name in the World, and good Principles, in order to a success

success in my Work; and I hope I can truly say, it is more for the Honour of God and the Gospel than mine own, I am thus concerned. And, Sir, if you please, I will accept of your Proposition before the Ministers, and discourse these following Points, you spending one hour and half, and I another, for the Investigation of the Truth, and leave the whole to the Blessing of God, and the Judgment of the Auditory.

1. Whether the Seed of Believers as such, are in the everlasting Covenant of Grace? if you affirm it, I deny it.

2. If you will undertake to prove Infants have Faith, Habitual-Faith, I shall labour to prove it appears not from Scripture or Experience, nor any other way as I know of.

3. Whether the Baptism of Infants be of Divine Authority? if you affirm, I deny it; and shall prove that the Baptizing Persons upon a Profession of Faith, and them only, hath Divine Authority for that Practice.

4. If you will undertake to prove that it doth genuinely and naturally follow, if Infants have no Faith, they must be damned, I shall endeavour to shew it to be a Nonsequitur, and no good Logick.

5. From such a Position as this, Elect dying Infants saved by the Blood of Christ, and the Imputation of his Righteousness, whether it genuinely and naturally follows from these Premises, an Exclusion of Sanctification and Cleansing in the same Subject? if you will stand upon the Vindication of this Conclusion as natural, I will undertake to prove it a forced, unfair, unjust Conclusion, who subscribe my self

Your Faithful Friend,

Hercules Collins.

In the following Discourse you have not only Truth asserted, but Mr. Mence his Errors detected, in his handling the same Subject. Act. 2. 39. For the Promise, &c.

ACTS 2. 39.

For the Promise is unto you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call.

THe Apostle in his divine Discourse or Sermon, having asserted v. 36. That God had made that same Jesus whom they had crucified both Lord and Christ: The Holy Ghost setting in with this Doctrine, in the Accomplishment of the Promise which Christ made, that the Spirit should convince the World of sin, they were immediately pricked at the Heart in a powerful Conviction, which made them to cry out, Men and Brethren what shall we do? The Apostle being full of Compassion upon this Cry, gives them a most comfortable Cordial to support their fainting Souls, and lays Duty and Promise before them; saying, Repent, and be Baptized every

one of you, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost: For these Promises are to you, tho' you have Crucified the Lord, and to your Children too, if ye and they believe and own that Messiah ye have crucified; and also to them afar off, even the poor Gentiles and Heathens, if they give Christ the Glory of their Salvation; for the Partition Wall of Separation is broken down, and now the Children of the Flesh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promise; that is, true Believers are the spiritual Seed of Abraham, being now through believing all one in Christ. And it is worthy our Consideration, that

that Mr. Mence and others do build upon a sandy Foundation, for they suppose those Parents here in this Text actual Believers, which is apparent were not yet such, though under Conviction; for had they been such, why should the Apostle have exhorted them to Repentance in the verse before? for where saving Faith is there is true Repentance, so that this Promise unto the Parents at this time was upon the Terms of Repentance and Faith, and upon the same Terms their Children, yea, and the Gentiles afar off had a Right to the Promise of Remission of sins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. The Observation we ought to raise from these Words is this:

Doct. The Promise of Remission of Sins and Gift of the Holy Ghost, is freely made unto the vilest of sinners, whether Parents or Children of Jew and Gentile, which are effectually called and qualified with the Grace of Faith, Repentance and Obedience.

This is the full Scope and Design of the Apostle in mentioning these Promises, to prevent their Desperation; therefore tells them, tho' they had been such great Criminals as to crucify the Lord of Glory, yet if they did fall in with his Exhortation, they might yet be a happy People.

In the handling of this point I shall observe this Method: (1st.) Shew what is meant by Children in the Text. (2^{ly}.) Enquire whether there be not some special Reason for the Apostles mentioning the Children of the Jews. (3^{ly}.) Enquire whether the Promise here belongs to this Chapter, or some other part of the holy Scripture; and whether there be an Identity or Oneness in this Promise, and that made to Abraham and his Natural Seed, Gen. 17. 7. (4^{ly}.) I shall prove that God made two Covenants with Abraham, as he was a twofold head. (5^{ly}.) I shall demonstrate from Scripture Arguments, that the Covenant which God made unto Abraham and his Seed according to the flesh, in Gen. 17. 7, 8. is not the Covenant of Grace. (6^{ly}.) A Survey of Mr. Mence his Book *Judicia Fœderis*, upon the same Text.

(1.) What Children may the Apostle mean, when he saith, the Promise is to you and your Children.

Ans. The Apostle cannot intend Infant Children as such, but as such they are excluded; because Infant Children are not capable of the Qualifications here required, which gives a Right to the Promise; namely, Repentance, Obedience, and Effectual Calling; there-

fore they must be adult Children, and such as can give a rational Account of their Faith. My Child is my Child when twenty or thirty years old as much as when 8 days old, therefore there's no Argument in this for the *Pædo-Baptists*, forasmuch as the whole Body of the Jews are called the Children of Israel, Rom. 10. 28. The Promise here made to their Children are upon the same Terms as made to their Fathers, and no other; for the Promise of Remission of Sins, and Gift of the Holy Ghost, are made to those Parents and Children, and them only in this Text, who have the Qualifications of Repentance and Obedience; and the Gentiles afar off have an equal Right under these Considerations; and whatever any of their Infant Children might be with reference to Gods Love of Intention, yet none of them grown up could actually partake of these Promises until so and so qualified as the Context mentions.

(2.) But is there not some special Reason why the Apostle should say, *The Promise is to you, and to your Children?*

Ans. No doubt but there is some peculiar Reason for it, but the Reason is not because there was any more federal Holiness or Habitual Faith in those Children of the Jews than in others, for *We all go astray from the Womb, telling Lyes*; but the special Reason why the Apostle thus speaks, was in Answer to their Interrogation, *verse 37*. When they were convinced they had been the Murderers of the true Christ, they cry out, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* The Apostle exhorts them to Repent and be Baptized, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, for the Remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost: But methinks I hear them say unto Peter, but what will become of our Children? for we called for Christs Blood to be upon us and our Childrens Heads, *Mat. 27. 25*. The Apostle gives them a Plaister as broad as their Sore, and tells them, that the Promise is to them and their Children, if they own that Messiah whom they Crucified: And this Sense of the place my Opponent often gives in his Book, yet in page the 19th. tells us, there are some I know for a shift will urge that Imprecation in the aforesaid Text, as the principal Reason why the Apostle saith, *The Promise is to you, and to your Children*; so that when Mr. Mence pleaseth, this shall be a good Exposition, and when he pleaseth, not; surely he will not monopolize the Opening of Scripture

ture to himself, that he thus dealeth with us: So that you see the special Reason why the Apostle phraseth it thus, *The Promise is to you and your Children*, it was to comfort their Souls, in telling them that Christs Blood should neither lye on their Heads nor their Childrens, which they in madness desired to fall upon them, rather than the Son of God should go uncrucified, if they and their Children did believe in Christ, and were effectually called; and 'tis very probable that some of their Children might cry, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him*, as their Fathers did, and so were actually concern'd in his Blood-shed, and so the Children stood in need of as comfortable a Promise as the Fathers; however this Promise reacheth all their Children, one and the other, who are capable of the Qualifications of Repentance, Faith, and Obedience, mention'd in the Context.

Thirdly, Let us enquire, where is the Promise the Apostle refers to: I know many, with my Antagonist, do not only think, but too confidently affirm, that the Apostle refers unto the Promise made to *Abraham* and his Natural Seed, but this is not very probable, seeing he gives us not the least Intimation of it, which was the practice of Christ and his Apostles, when they mention'd any thing contain'd in the Law and the Prophets, to give us an Account who they were, and where it was written, *Luk. 24. 49. Act. 2. 16, 17, 18.*

2ly. The Promise in the Text is Spiritual, and not Typical and Temporary, as that made to *Abraham* and his fleshly seed; the Promise is in the verse before the Text, which is Spiritual Blessings, to wit, *The Pardon of Sin, and Gift of the Holy Ghost*. Its not the Promise of a Deliverance from a literal *Egypt*, nor the Promise of a temporary *Canaan*, but of spiritual and eternal good things; and had all *Abraham's* natural seed these Promises made to them, it should certainly have been fulfilled, for God is faithful. Let me give you one Argument upon it before I pass it; If God hath made a Promise of remission of Sins, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost, to all the fleshly seed of Believers, it would be performed, but it is not so perform'd; all their fleshly seed have not these Benefits, therefore God never promised it to them, for God is faithful, and cannot deny himself. Such Promises aforesaid are only made to the Elect, as Dr. Owen on the *Hebrews*, 3d. Vol. page 256. "The Covenant of Grace in Christ is made only with the *Israel* of God, the Church of

"the Elect, page 291. The New Covenant is "made with all, who effectively and eventually "are made partakers of it; and if they are not "so with whom the new Covenant is made, it "comes short of the Old in Efficacy, who were "actual partakers of the Benefit of that.

Object. What can be a more spiritual Blessing than that, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed*, Gen. 17. 7, 8.

Answer. There is a great deal of Difference in the Scripture concerning Gods being a Peoples God: God is said to be a God of the Spirits of all flesh, this is not to be understood in a special manner, but as God in common to his Creatures; so when God said to *Israel*, *Exod. 20. 1. I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt*: Mark, wherever God is mention'd in such a Relation to a mixt People, as these were, it always respects external Priviledges; so was this Promise of God to *Abraham* and his Natural Seed, he would be their God, and his Attributes should be exerted, and his Glorious Arm stretched out, to carry them into the good Land of *Canaan*, flowing with Milk and Honey: But when God makes over himself in the Covenant of Grace to be a Peoples God, the Subjects in that Covenant have the Promises of Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification, which none will say all Believers Natural Seed partake of these Blessings.

3ly. The Promise in the Text cannot be the *Abrahamic* Covenant, to him and his Carnal Seed, because that Covenant was to him and his Seed, in their successive Generations from *Isaac*. God was not only a God to their immediate Seed, but to their remote Seed. Mark, if God doth take thy immediate Child into Covenant, as thou art a Believer, then you must conclude he will be a God to your remote Generations, for this is his Covenant with *Abraham*, and he made it good for many hundred years to their successive Generations, till that Covenant was broken and totally expired; and until that the Covenant stood fast with the Infants of the ungodly, as well as those of the Godly Parents; so that the Promise in the Text cannot be the Covenant with *Abraham*, because it doth not extend to successive Generations; for the Line of Election, whatsoever my Opponent may say or think, is not limited unto Godly Families, as appears from *Abraham*, *Abijah*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, *Asa*, whose Parents were ungodly Roots, and yet had a godly Off-spring.

4ly. This

4ly. This cannot be the Covenant made with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 7.* because that was made to him in his fleshly Seed from *Isaac* only, but this Promise in the Text is made to all the spiritual Seed of *Jews* and *Gentiles*. Now mark, the Child of a believing *Gentile*, as his fleshly Seed is not the Seed of *Abraham* in any sense, he is not the Natural Seed, because born of a *Gentile*, not a *Jew*; nor he cannot be as such his spiritual seed until he believes, therefore this Promise in the Text cannot be the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his seed, because this Promise belongs only to a spiritual seed.

5ly. This Promise could not be the Abrahamic Covenant, because that Covenant was broken before this Time, which was shew'd unto *Zachary*, *Chap. 11.* by the breaking of the Staff of *Beauty* and the Staff of *Bands*, for their Betraying and Crucifying the *Messiah*, foreseen by a Spirit of Prophecy; this could not be the Covenant of Grace broken, for that's immutable, therefore 'twas that peculiar Covenant God made with *Abraham* and his natural seed.

Secondly, That the Abrahamic Covenant must be repeal'd, appears, because whatever Interest Infants had in the Jewish Church whilst that Oeconomy stood, it could not give them right to a Gospel-ministration; the old way of Initiating Members is repeal'd, therefore the old Covenant is repeal'd; then Infants were admitted members, who could make no Profession of Faith, but now none but such as can; then their natural seed, now a spiritual seed.

Thirdly, None are accounted now the seed of *Abraham* but such as actually believe, *Gal. 3. ult.* *Abraham's* seed is distinguished into three sorts: 1st. Merely natural, who walk'd not in the steps of *Abraham*, as *Ishmael* and *Esau*, &c. 2ly. His Seed spiritual and natural, which was twofold: (1.) Extraordinary, so Christ was born of a Virgin, who descended from *Abraham's* Loyns. (2.) Ordinary, so all believing *Jews* were all *Abraham's* natural and spiritual seed. 3ly. His seed merely spiritual, such were all believing *Gentiles* who walk'd in the steps of their Father *Abraham*, they are called his Children, as he was called the great and high Father of the faithful, and because we have the same spiritual and eternal Inheritance, *Rom. 4.*

Fourthly, The Covenant with *Abraham* and his natural seed was only shadowy and typical,

both in the sign Circumcision, and in the Inheritance, the Land of *Canaan*; the Substance being come, the shadow flies away, *Col. 2. 16.* *Heb. 10. 1.* Moreover, the sanction of that old Covenant is antiquated both in the Promises and Threatnings, for upon Obedience they were to enjoy the Land of *Canaan*, and upon a wilful Neglect of Circumcision they were to be cut off from the People; but we are to expect no such promises, nor are there any to inflict such a Punishment, therefore that Covenant must be repeal'd. Moreover, seeing all *Abraham's* natural seed were not in Covenant, why should any Believers now conclude all their Children in Covenant, for neither *Ishmael*, nor *Esau*, nor the Children *Abraham* had by *Keturah* were in it; for God said, my Covenant shall stand fast with *Isaac*. And whereas our Brethren will have all the immediate seed of Believers included in the Covenant, as here they are too large, because all *Abraham's* immediate seed were not in it, as you see, so in another respect they are too strait, by restraining it to their immediate Offspring, which in *Abraham's* Covenant was not so restrain'd, but came as fully upon remote Generations: They straiten it also by excluding the Servants and Slaves of Christians, with the Children born of them, from that privilege which they suppose them to have enjoy'd under the Old Testament, in being seal'd with the sign and token of the Covenant of Grace. Moreover, let it be consider'd, that though *Lot*, *Melchizedek* and *Joh.* were Believers, yet neither they nor their Children were under an Obligation of Circumcision, because limited by a special Command of God to *Abraham's* Family, to such a Sex and such a day, except Proselytes; so that Circumcision was ligited unto *Abraham's* Family, and tho' those good men were in the Covenant of Grace, yet this Rite nothing affected them nor their seed, because of its special Limitation, no more can Baptism concern any persons whatever, but those unto whom God hath by a special Command limited it, namely, profess Believers, and them only.

4. I shall shew, as *Abraham* was a twofold Head, so God made with him a twofold Covenant; he was a spiritual Head to all believing *Jews* and *Gentiles*; hence he is stiled the Father of us all, *Rom. 4. 16.*

2ly. He was a Natural Head to those issued out of his Loyns; as he was a Believer, and spiritual Head, God made a Covenant and promise

mise of Grace to him and his spiritual seed: As he was a Natural Head, God made with him and his Natural Seed a Covenant of Peculiarity.

Our Brethren which differ from us, for want of distinguishing, and by their mixing and confounding those Covenants, run themselves, Auditors and Readers, into many Inconveniencies, clouding and darkening their Understanding, and making a Gospel Church unavoidably National, as the Jewish Church was; it runs them upon the use of many unfound Tropicks and Mediums, forceth them to draw untimely and natural Inferences, and so fill their Books and Sermons with Nonsequiturs, Incoherences, Self-contradictions. In a word, it runs them into many gross Absurdities, as may too quickly appear.

Now its plain God made two distinct Covenants with *Abraham*, both of a differing Nature; the right Understanding of it may be as a Key to open this Controversie.

In *Gen. 17.* from 7. to 21. you have the peculiar Covenant with *Abraham* and his Natural seed from *Isaac*, which no way affects Believing Gentiles and their natural seed, because they are not the seed of *Abraham* in any sense, as afore said; they are not *Abraham's* natural, because born of a *Gentile*, not a *Jew* nor spiritual seed, because they are Infants, and no actual Believers, therefore this Covenant can no ways affect Believing *Gentiles* and their seed.

Moreover, in that Transaction with *Abraham*, there are Promises, Precepts, Threatnings, which no way affect us under the Gospel, as was before hinted; what is literal *Canaan* or *Egypt* to us? what is Circumcision to us? nothing at all; yet were principles in this peculiar Covenant. Neither do we deny there was any Grace or Favour in this Transaction with *Abraham* and his natural seed; for I am inclined to believe, the very Covenant of Works was not without Favour and Grace in some sense, but I deny this Covenant was the Covenant of Grace. Seeing you and others insist so much upon it, let us give a Definition of the Covenant of Grace, which is God's Promise of Justification, Sanctification and Glorification, unto all the Elect, upon the Account of Redemption and Satisfaction by Christ, in his Death and State of Humiliation; the Sum of this Covenant we have in *Heb. 8.* 10, 11, 12. God becomes a Peoples God for Christs sake, hence his Blood is called the Blood of the New and Everlasting Covenant, because it was procured and ratified by it, the Essence of

this Covenant is, that God makes over himself in Christ, with all his Attributes, Christ and all his Offices, the Spirit and all his saving Operations; the Elect by virtue of this Covenant of Grace have a Right to all the precious Promises, and are by it secur'd; all Providence shall work for their Good, and Eternal Glory their Reward at last. Now is it not hard for any to believe, that every Believers Child is in this Covenant? surely it is.

2. God made with *Abraham* a Covenant and Promise of Grace, as he was a Believer, and so a Head and Father of a spiritual seed, this was quite of another Nature to the Covenant of Circumcision: The Promise and Covenant of Grace is more general and universal, for that comprehends all Nations, *Gen. 12. 3.* In thy seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed: But the Promises in the Covenant of Circumcision belonged to one Nation only, namely, the Jews, but now in the New Covenant it is in every Nation, He that fears God and worketh Righteousness is accepted, *Acts 10. 35.* This is one Material Difference, and here *Abraham* is not only a Father to Believing Jews, but also to Believing Gentiles. (2.) These Covenants differ in their Promises as well as the Subject, for the Promises of the Covenant of Grace are called better Promises, *Heb. 8. 6.* as well as the Covenant a better Covenant than that Covenant; Circumcision obliged them to those Promises were temporal, tho we do not deny but they were typical of better things; but the Promises in the Covenant of Grace are better, there is the Promise of a new Heart, Justification, Sanctification, and an Eternal Inheritance. (3.) These Covenants differ in the mode and manner of Performance, for in the Covenant of Circumcision God was their God in their successive Generations, without Interruption, but in the Covenant of Grace it is not so, for here one of a City and two of a Family are called, and others of a City and Family left; sad Experience sheweth that the Line of Election runs not through Religious Families, for tho' Election reached *Abraham*, yet not *Ishmael* his Son, and *Isaac*, yet not *Esau* his Son, and *David*, yet not *Abshalom*; from hence we may see how unconfusive that Consequence is. Our Brethren frequently make use of that, as God was a God in Covenant with *Abraham* and his seed, who were circumcised, so he is a God unto Believing Gentiles and their seed, therefore they ought to be baptized: Pray then go to the End of the Chapter, let it be only Males, for such were only

only Circumcised; and by the same Argument your Children may expect a Possession in *Jerusalem*, which is now inhabited by the *Turks and Mahumetans*. Moreover, you must baptize upon the Eighth Day, and never fail, for that was a Breach of *Abraham's Covenant*, to circumcise sooner, or defer it longer; so that such Consequences cannot be of God, because it crosseth the Doctrine and Commands of the Gospel, which Gospel obligeth none to be baptized but such as can make profession of their Faith; thus you see there were two distinct Covenants made with *Abraham*. Indeed *pag. 40*. He tells us, there are two ways of being in the Covenant of Grace, *viz.* Externally and Internally; this is a humane Device, God's Word knows nothing of it, for this is to be in the House and out of the House at the same time; is there any such thing in the Rule of Faith, as to be outwardly and inwardly in the Covenant of Grace? When God saith, *This Covenant shall stand fast with Christ and his spiritual Seed*, he doth not say, the internal or external part of the Covenant shall stand fast with him, but the Covenant of Grace, without distinction of outward and inward. If our Brethren say, there was but one Covenant made with him, and that Circumcision was the Administration of that Covenant, as Baptism is now; if so, there is a great deal must be recalled, which is, that believing Infants are in the Covenant of Grace, whereas it seems it is but the Administration of that Covenant: And here again our Brethren run upon a Rock, for if we ask what they mean by Infants of Believers being in the Covenant of Grace? they answer, they are in the External part of the Covenant; if you ask, what is that? they say, the Administration of the Covenant; if you ask, what is that? they will tell you it is Baptism; so that the whole amounts to no more than this, such Children they ought to be baptized, because they ought to be baptized; thus you may see what little Reason there is for making such a stir about Infant-Incovenanting, and whether it be not a horrible slander, to report we do what we can to shut our Infants out of the Kingdom of Heaven, and send them by Swarms into Hell: For when all comes to all, they confess this is no more but denying them Baptism, which they own if they have, it may notwithstanding lye scorching in Hell with *Dives*; so that by their own Confession, seeing Baptism will

not open Heavens Gate to them, nor shut Hells, to prevent their Entrance in, its more than probable these Persons do act against Light of Conscience, when they do charge such dreadful things upon our Opinion, that we shut Heavens Gate against Infants, and send them to Hell, because we deny them Baptism; yet confess, that those that have it, are neither nearer Heaven, nor the further off from Hell: And tho' we dare not grant all the natural seed of Believers in the Covenant of Grace, yet we do all allow such Children have great Advantages, which the Children of ungodly Parents have not, as a good Education, a Holy Example, together with a stock of Prayers that is going for them, but for all this we know of no Ground to baptize them. I hope our Brethren will allow us a share of Natural Affections to our Children with them, that if we knew of any thing that would contribute to their souls good, we would not deny them; but to fancy they have an Advantage, when there is no ground for it, is equivalent to a Person dreaming he eats Dainties, but when he awakes he is very hungry, and finds it was but a Dream.

Argu. 5. If all Believers Children are in the Covenant of Grace, they are in it either absolutely or conditionally. None will dare to say, they are in this Covenant absolutely, because then they should all be saved; and if they are there conditionally, *viz.* upon the Terms of Repentance and Faith, then the Children of Unbelievers have an equal Right with them in this Covenant, under these Considerations, and so an equal Right to the Seals of the Covenant; yea, and a Right before them, if they have these Qualifications, and the Believers Child wants them.

5th. Gen. Head is to prove that that Covenant God made with *Abraham* and his Natural seed, was not the Covenant of Grace, *Gen. 17. 7, 8, &c.* which *Mr. Mence* and many others assert.

Argu. 1. The Covenant of Grace extends unto all Nations, the Covenant of Circumcision was limited to one Nation, *Ergo*, the Covenant of Circumcision is not the Covenant of Grace.

That the Covenant of Grace extends it self unto all Nations, I think none will deny, See *Gen. 12. 3. Chap. 15. 5, 6. Gen. 17. 4. Chap. 22. 16, 17, 18. Gal. 3. 14. Acts 10. 33, 34, 35. Rom. 4. 16, 17.* and that the Covenant of Circumcision was limited to the Nation of the *Jews* only,

as a Nation, is confest by all, therefore the Consequence follows roundly, that the Covenant of Circumcision is not the Covenant of Grace, but some other Covenant, which I call a Covenant of Peculiarity unto that People; and for two Covenants of Grace I suppose none ever did imagine, for that Promise which God made unto Adam, Gen. 3. 15. and that to Abraham, Gen. 12. 3. for Substance was the same we are now under, being never but one Covenant of Grace.

Argu. 2. That Covenant which obligeth to keep the whole Law is not the Covenant of Grace, but the Covenant of Circumcision obligeth to keep the whole Law, *Ergo*, the Covenant of Circumcision is not the Covenant of Grace.

The Major is undeniable, for that which obligeth us to keep a Law of Works for Justification and Life, must necessarily belong to that Law of Works, and not to the Law of Grace; and for the Minor, that the Covenant of Circumcision did oblige to the keeping the whole Law, the Apostle is express in *Gal. 5. 2, 3, 4.* For I testifie unto every Man that is circumcised, that he is a Debtor to the whole Law, and that Christ profits them nothing that are circumcised: From hence the Consequence follows, that the Covenant of Circumcision is not the Covenant of Grace; for we see it is here directly opposed unto Christ and the Covenant of Grace, and called in *Gal. 5. 1.* and *Acts 15. 10.* a Yoke of Bondage which they nor their Fathers were able to bear: And saith the Apostle, if you do think you are justified by the Law, which Circumcision obligeth you unto, ye are fallen from Grace.

3d. Argu. That Covenant which is abrogated and repealed is not the Covenant of Grace, but the Covenant of Circumcision is abrogated and repealed, *Ergo*, the Covenant of Circumcision is not the Covenant of Grace. As for the Minor, there are few in the World but such as are *Judaizing* will deny, and such generally disown Christ for a Saviour; and for the Major none that I have to deal withal do suppose there can be a Repealing a Covenant of Grace, therefore the Consequence follows, that Circumcision was not the Covenant of Grace; for the Covenant of Grace is the last Dispensation, and admits of no repeal; read *Gal. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* which fully informs you about the repealing the Covenant of Circumcision, and *Rom. 4.* also the Apostle asserts *Rom. 11.* The Branches were

broken off; that could not be from the Covenant of Grace, for that is permanent, *Ergo*, it is from the Covenant of Circumcision and peculiarity, the breaking of *Zachariah's Staff of Beauty and Bands* did signifie Gods breaking that Covenant with them, upon Rejection of Christ; and now the partition-wall is broken down, we are all one in Christ, *Eph. 2. 12, 13, 14.* *Col. 3. 11, 12.* Further, this Covenant of Circumcision might be broken, 'tis supposed from *Gen. 17. 14.* But the Covenant of Grace is like the Covenant God made with *Noah*, an immutable and absolute Covenant, not to drown the World any more; neither will he be so wroth with his to cast them off for ever, *Isa. 54. 7, 8, 9.*

Object. Are there not many cast out of the Churches in Gospel-times?

Answer. Persons may profess to be in Christ, and in the Covenant of Grace, but this is barely a Profession of what they never had, for they never were in the Covenant of Grace really; but our Brethren say, their Children are indeed in the Covenant of Grace, and yet some such may have the hottest place in Hell; this we do not believe, and though it be really true; *Abrahams* Natural Seed from *Isaac* was really in the Covenant of Circumcision, yet every Believers Child is not really in the Covenant of Grace.

Argu. 4. Justification doth not belong to the Covenant of Circumcision, *Ergo*, the Covenant of Circumcision is not the Covenant of Grace: The Antecedent appears from *Rom. 4. 9, 10, 11, 12.* here the Apostle opposeth one to the other, and tells them, that *Abraham* was accounted a Believer, and righteous, not in Circumcision but in Uncircumcision, and therefore they had no cause to boast, as if *Abraham* had been justified by the Law of Circumcision, or a Law of Works: No, saith the Apostle, *It was before he was circumcised; and he received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the Righteousness of his Faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all them which believe, though they be not circumcised, that Righteousness might be imputed to them also:* And pray observe, that Circumcision was a Seal only to his Personal Faith, and not to Infants that have no Faith, and this Seal was, that he might be the Father of all that believe, tho' not circumcised, and that Righteousness and Life might be imputed where Faith was, tho' no Circumcision, which obliged them to a Law of Works for Life; so the

the Apostle in *Gal. 5.* opposeth circumcision to the Covenant of Grace, and tells them, if they were circumcised, Christ should profit them nothing, because Circumcision obliged them to keep the Law for Life and Righteousness; thus the Antecedent is fully proved, that Justification doth not belong to the Covenant of Circumcision; the Consequent follows, that the Covenant of Circumcision is not the Covenant of Grace; for every good Christian understands that Justification can belong to no other Covenant than the Covenant of Grace; it never did yet belong to the Covenant of Circumcision, which obliged to the Law; for never was one justified by any Law of Works, but only by a Covenant of Grace, from *Adams* fall to this day.

Argu. 5. The Covenant of Circumcision had only temporal Blessings promised in it, *Ergo*, it could not be the Covenant of Grace, the Antecedent is clear from *Gen. 17.* from 7, to 21. *Deut. 28.* from 1, to 14. *Jer. 11. 2, 3, 4, 5.* Hear ye the Words of this Covenant, and speak to the Men of Judah, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem: And say thou unto them; thus saith the Lord God of Israel, cursed be the Man that obeyeth not the Words of this Covenant, which I commanded your Fathers in the day when I brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, from the Iron Furnace, saying, obey my voice and do them, according to all which I commanded you; so shall ye be my People, and I will be your God. That I may perform the Oath which I have sworn unto your Fathers, to give them a Land flowing with Milk and Honey, as it is this day; then answered I, and said, so be it O Lord. Thus you see they had only a Promise of Temporal Blessings, as, the Land of *Canaan*, and to be blest in their Basket, and in their Store, in their going out and coming in, &c. But the Covenant of Grace, the principal Promises in it were spiritual good things, as God being a Peoples God in an especial manner, a new Heart, *Ezek. 36. 26.* Pardon of sin, the Law written in the Heart, and a saving Knowledge of God; hence those Promises are called *better Promises*, implying the others were worse; and tho' it be granted, that many of the Natural Seed of *Abraham* did partake of those spiritual Blessings, yet not from the Covenant of Circumcision, but the Covenant of Grace: And thus the Apostle strenuously argues in *Rom. 4. 13, &c.* For the promise to *Abraham* of an eternal Inheritance was not through Circumcision or the Law, unto which Circumcision

did oblige them, but through the Righteousness of Faith, and it was to be by that Covenant where in Faith in the Messiah was a Principle, that it might be by Grace; and that the Promise might be sure to all the spiritual seed. So *Gal. 3. 18.* the Apostle there tells us, If the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise, that is of Grace, if it be of Works, but God gave it to *Abraham* by a free Promise, and not by a Law of Bondage, both being held forth by *Sarah* the Free-Woman, and *Hagar* the Bond-Woman, *Gal. 4.* So the Apostle, *Heb. 6.* informs us that the Saints strong Consolation and Hope of eternal Life was from the free Promise of Grace God made unto *Abraham*, *Gen. 22. 16, 17, 18.*

Argu. 6. The Covenant of Circumcision could not be the Covenant of Grace, because persons out of this Covenant might be saved, and such as were in this Covenant might be damned; it's well known that *Laz* and *Job*, and his four godly Friends, were not in the Covenant of Circumcision, being made to *Abraham* and his seed only from *Isaac*, and yet all the godly then were saved, tho' not in that Covenant, but as being in the Covenant of Grace. Again, were not all *Dauids* Sons in this Covenant, yet how few except *Solomon* in the Covenant of Grace and Life? and this is an Argument *ad hominem*; for my Opponent asserts, that some in this Covenant of Grace may have the hottest place in Hell; but how contrary this is to Gods Word let us consider; for holy *David* thought himself safe enough, when he knew his Interest in the Covenant of Grace, *2 Sam. 23. 5.*

Argu. 7. To suppose Circumcision-Covenant the Covenant of Grace, overthrows many fundamental Points of Religion, and many Absurdities follow it; therefore it cannot be such a Covenant, but there are no Absurdities really follow the asserting of a Truth, but many follow in asserting an Error; and the Absurdities which follow are these:

1. Consider the chief Privileges of the Covenant of Grace are Adoption and Sonship, Justification and inward Sanctification, all which privileges that Generation must be born to, if they are born Heirs of a Covenant of Grace; from hence this fundamental point of Religion must be denied, that all Mankind are by nature the Children of Wrath, *Eph. 2. 2.*

2ly. This Opinion of holding the Covenant of Grace, intailed in the flesh, opposeth

it self to the stability which is in the Covenant of Grace and Eternal Life; for taking this for granted to be a Truth, that all born in the Church of the Jews were born Heirs of the Covenant of Grace, then most of the Church of Israel that were in the Covenant of Grace were damned, and not saved, *Isa. 10. 22, 23. Tho' Israel were as the sand of the Sea, yet but a remnant of them were saved.*

3ly. This Notion and Error overthrows the necessity of Conversion or Regeneration, which Doctrine is eminently confirmed by Christ as a fundamental Truth, *John 3. 5.* But to what purpose should any man seek their Conversion who are born Heirs of a Covenant of Grace? Dr. Owen in his Exposition on *Heb. ch. 2. p. 250.* saith thus, "*For both be that sanctified and them which are sanctified are all one*; there is then surely a woful Mistake in the World, &c. And then adds, "*It is grown almost an Abhorrency unto all flesh, to say, that the Church of God is to be holy, &c.*" And further saith, "*If men be baptized, whether they will or no, and outwardly professes the Name of Christ, tho not one of them be truly sanctified, yet they are, as it is said, the Church of Christ; why then let them be so, what are they the better for it? are their Persons or Services therefore accepted of God? are they related unto or united to Christ? are they under his Conduct unto Glory? are they meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light? not at all; not any of these things do they obtain thereby? what is it then that they get by the furious Contests which they make for the reputation of this Privilege? only this Mark, that satisfying their Minds by resting, if not priding themselves in it, they obtain many Advantages to stifle all Conventions of their Condition, and so perish unavoidably. Doth not the Doctor say as much as this, that it takes Persons off from the thoughts of the Necessity of Conversion, for they were Baptized in Infancy, and then made Members of Christs Church. And another great Man of the same Judgment, saith, "That the wide door of Regeneration by Baptism hath sent thousands into Hell; so that I am not alone in my Opinion.*"

4ly. This Opinion destroys the Doctrine of the New Covenant, and the Nature of it, and the Manner of Gods making it with the Soul; for God to make a New Covenant with the Soul is to write the Law of God in a Mans heart, and in his Mind, and to infuse saving know-

ledge and Faith, by which God unites the Soul to himself, and so pardons all his sins, whereas this Dream would seem to bear you in hand, that a whole Nation may be in a New Covenant of Grace, and yet have none of all this Work wrought upon their Hearts.

5ly. This Opinion destroys the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Christ, seeing it holds another way of Justification, which is by Carnal Birth of Believing Parents; for if Souls be admitted into the Covenant of Grace and Life, you are not ignorant that Justification is a great privilege in that Covenant, and really the Portion of all that are in that Covenant.

6ly. This Notion destroys the Doctrine and Foundation of all Gospel Churches; which appears in two things:

1. It destroys the Matter of a Church, which under the Gospel are Saints by calling, *2 Cor. 1. 2.* Spiritual Worshippers, *Joh. 4. 24.* such as are redeemed from a vain Conversation, *1 Pet. 1. 18.* and are brought out of Darkness into Light, and are living stones, *1 Pet. 2. 7.* But this Error it brings, in the Nation of Believers, all born of their Body, their Seed, and their Seeds Seed in their Generations, if they will be faithful to their Principle, these must be all Members of Christs Church.

2ly. It tends to destroy the true Constitution of a Church, which is to baptize those, and those only, who do make a Profession of Repentance and Faith, and so admit them immediately to the Table of the Lord; but here Persons are made Members without having any regard to a Gospel-Constitution.

In page 30. Mr. Menno demands of his Opponent, where God made a Covenant of Works with his redeemed People since the fall of Man? but he forgets him self miserably, and contradicts himself, for in page 33. he tells you of a Law of Works, and a Covenant of Works, which Covenant and Law, saith he, holds forth no Pardon to Transgressors that violate and break the smallest point of it, and refers you to *Gal. 3. 10.* which place refers unto *Deut. 27. 26.* which respected the Sinai Covenant: But seeing my Opponent requires where God made a Covenant of Works with his redeemed People since the Fall, I shall shew him that from abundance of Scripture Arguments.

1. That Covenant and Ministration which *saith and condemneth*, cannot be the Covenant of Grace, but of such the Apostle makes mention in *2 Cor. 3. ch.*

2. There

2. There is a Law unto which Believers are lead to, in point of seeking Justification and Life from it, which cannot be the Covenant of Grace, but of Works; for Saints are not dead to a Covenant of Grace, *Rom. 7. 1, 2, 3,*

4. That Covenant which is repealed for the faultiness of it, because it could not justify, but was in that point weak through the flesh, that could not be the Covenant of Grace, for that will never be repealed, *Ergo*, it must be a Covenant of Works, *Heb. 8.* and therefore God he makes a New Covenant, because the Old was deficient, not in it self, but through the Weakness of the flesh, as aforesaid,

4. That Law which Grace is opposed unto must be the Law of Works, *Rom. 6. 14.* For ye are not under the Law, but under Grace; and therefore sin should not have dominion over them, which had they been under a Law of Works, sin would have had dominion over them, and then would have condemned them for ever, *Rom. 11. 6.* There the Apostle argueth strongly, that Election and Salvation was not from Works, but Grace; which is the same with the Law of Works in *Rom. 7.*

5. That Covenant which none could have Life by, or be justified by, and the Righteousness whereof is opposed to the Righteousness of Faith, must be a Law and Covenant of Works, and not of Grace; of such the Apostle makes mention in *Gal. 3. 21. Rom. 10. 5. Rom. 3. 20.*

6. That Covenant which was given with Horror, Trembling and Amazement, must be the Covenant of Works, but such was the *Sinai* Covenant, unto which the Hebrew Christians were not come, but to a more comfortable Covenant, *Heb. 12.*

7. That Covenant from the Curse whereof Believers are redeemed, could not be a Covenant of Grace, *Ergo*, it is a Covenant of Works, *Gal. 3. 13.*

8. That Law that is opposed unto Faith, cannot be the Law and Covenant of Grace, *Ergo*, it is the Covenant of Works, *Gal. 3. 11, 12.*

9. That Covenant which saith, *Do this and live*, must be a Covenant of Works, for the the Covenant of Grace saith, *believe and live*, and he that commands it, gives it, *Heb. 12. 2.*

10. That Covenant which was not confirmed by the Blood of Christ, but with the blood of Bulls, and Goats, could not be the Covenant of Grace, the everlasting Covenant of

Grace is ratified not with the Blood of the unreasonable Creature, but with the Blood of Christ, *Mat. 26. 26, 27. Heb. 9. Heb. 12.*

11. That Law through which had the Inheritance been conveyed, would have made Faith void, must be the Law of Works, and not of Grace, for saith the Apostle, *If they which are of the Law be heirs, Faith is made void, and the Promise is made of none Effect, Rom. 4. 14. Gal. 3. 18.* that cannot be the Covenant of Grace which makes Faith void, therefore it must be the Covenant of Works.

12. That Covenant which was contrary to us, and against us, which is now blotted out, and taken out of the way, and nailed to the Cross of Christ, could not be the Covenant of Grace, for that was never nailed to the Cross, nor will ever be taken away, *Ergo*, it is the Law of Works.

13. That Covenant which is a Bondage Covenant is not the Covenant of Grace, for that is a Covenant of Glorious Liberty of Access unto God; but of such a Covenant the Apostle speaks, *Gal. 4. 21, 22, 23, 24, 26.* which can be no other than a Covenant of Works.

14. That Covenant which had not Christ for the Mediator of it, could never be the Covenant of Grace, for its said of Christ, *He is the Mediator of a better Covenant, Heb. 8. 6, 7, 8, 9.* that is, of the Covenant of Grace, not of the Covenant of Works.

15. That Covenant which condemns for the least Fault all that are under the Works of the Law, cannot be a Covenant of Grace, but of Works, and such the *Sinai* Covenant is, *Gal. 3. 10.*

Thus I promise my self I have sufficiently cleared this point; also, that God hath since the Fall given unto Man a Covenant and Law of Works, but yet the design of it was Mercy, being as a School-master to lead us unto Christ, that we apprehending no Life nor Salvation by our Obedience, might apply our selves unto the Covenant of Grace and Righteousness of Christ for Relief.

A Review of Mr. Mence his Book Vinciclae Foederis.

IT's worthy of a Remark, that a great part of this Book consists in confounding the two Covenants together, and so confounds the Understanding of his poor Reader, as you may see

see page 12, 13, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, to 38, 63, 64, 72, 73, to 79, 88, 89, 95, 100, 101, 141. And for the eight Arguments to prove the Covenant, Gen. 17. 7. the Covenant of Grace, they are not cogent, but very impertinent, because of applying it to a wrong Subject; for those Arguments which properly belongs to the Covenant of Grace he applies to the Covenant of Circumcision; as for Instance,

His 1st. Argument is, *That this Covenant must be a Covenant of Grace, because God chose Abraham out of an Idolatrous Family*: A very weak sight may see this to be a Nonsequitur; what, because God made a Covenant of special Grace with Abraham, and gave him a special Call, doth it follow, he made such a Covenant, and gives such special Calls unto all his Natural Off-spring? Surely no.

His 2d. Argu. *That this is a Covenant of Grace*, concludes as little, which is from the Quality of the Person, Man being now in an Apostate State, this doth no way follow, that because Man is lapsed, that all Covenants in futurity made with him are Covenants of Grace; what tho' Man be imperfect, hath God lost his power of commanding, because Man lost his power of doing. If this Argument be true, then the Sinai Covenant was no Covenant of Works, because Man is fallen. I am of the Opinion, for this very reason, there was more need of a Covenant of Works, that man might see his own Impotency and Guilt, and be led by it, as was Gods end, as by a school-Master unto Christ and Salvation, by Free-Grace, Gal. 3. 24.

The 3d. Argu. *For this hath been enervated before*, wherein we shew'd, that Gods promising to be a God to Abraham and his seed, doth not infer that they all are in the Covenant of Grace. God is said to be the God of the Spirits of all flesh, and its said to the whole Body of the Jews, Exod. 20. 1. *I am the Lord your God*. Here he speaks to the ungodly as well as the godly, but who will conclude he was no otherwise a God to the Believers than the Unbelievers, tho' in Mr. Mence his sense it seems he is no other, for he applyeth the same Promises to one as to the other: All the spiritual Promises which belong only unto Abrahams spiritual Seed, he applies unto his carnal seed, page 31. as Heb. 8. 10. 2 Cor. 6. 18. Rev.

21. 3. Ezek. 36. 26. *To be a God to Abraham and his Seed*, hath been shewed that his glorious Attributes should be exerted for them, to protect, defend, deliver them from the seven Nations, and give them their Land for a Possession.

The 4th. Argu. *also is Herodox*, because he applyeth the Mediatorship of Christ, which belongs only to the Covenant of Grace, unto the Covenant of Circumcision, which Rite obliged them to keep the whole Law and Covenant of Works. And I do deny that Jesus Christ God-man was Mediator of that Covenant, because the Apostle tells us, *That Christ hath obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better promises*, Heb. 8. 6.

And his 5th. Argu. wants Crutches to uphold it, *doth this Covenant freely hold out the pardon of sins to them in it*? then how can any of the Natural Seed of Believers want eternal Happiness, when their sins are pardoned? but the sins of all the Children of Believers are not forgiven, therefore they are not all in the Covenant of Grace, for there is an infallible and eternal Connection between a Persons being in the Covenant of Grace and the Absolution of his sins, Heb. 8. 10, 11, 12.

The 6th. Argu. *is deficient in its medium*, which is, *because the seal Circumcision was affixed to it, therefore, saith he, it was a Covenant of Grace*; but for that very reason it could not be the Covenant of Grace, because Circumcision obliged them to keep the whole Law, the Covenant of Works; and if the Christians were circumcised in order to the keeping that Law for Justification, Christ should profit them nothing, Gal. 5. 1, 2, 3. From whence it is clear, he hath made use of a wrong Topick and Medium to prove his Argument, because Circumcision you see did belong to the Covenant of Works.

How defective his 7th. Argu. is, will appear, if it be considered, that he asserts, page 36. *The great Result and Period of the promise of the Land of Canaan to Abraham and his Natural Off-spring, was no less then Heaven*. Is this good Logick? God made a Promise to Abraham and his fleshly Seed, from Isaac, that they should enjoy the Land of Canaan, Ergo, all the Children of Believers shall have Eternal Glory.

The 8th. Argu. is defective also in its Medium, viz. *It must be a Covenant of Grace*, saith he, made, Gen. 17. 7. Because God exacted Obedi-

Obedience from *Abraham*, as if no Covenant, but the Covenant of Grace did exact Obedience; the *Sinai* Covenant required Obedience, tho' a Law of Works; and one thing *Abraham* was to see done in his Family was, that every Male-Child was circumcised on the eighth day, upon penalty of being cut off: Now every body knows that Circumcision, as aforesaid, obliged to the keeping the whole Law, and this was a part of *Abrahams* Obedience, even that work which obliged unto the *Sinai* Covenant, and therefore it is but a begging for to limit *Abrahams* Obedience here, to that which is properly called the Covenant of Grace.

And for these Privileges which he saith the Natural Seed of Believers have, in page 44. They are such as render the Gospel-Church National as ever the *Jewish* Church was, because he proceeds upon the same Mediums as renders them alike, tho' indeed the Gospel-Church is far from a National Constitution.

1. He tells us, *They had Gods Oracles committed to them, as a Nation in Covenant with God, and none in all the World had such Laws and Statutes as they*: But what doth this signifie now, for they have not only the Law removed as at first given, but the Gospel too in Judgment; and now Gods Oracles, Laws and Gospel, is not confin'd to one Nation, but the Commission is to go into all the World, and preach the Gospel; not only to a Covenant People, but to the chiefest of sinners.

2. *Is not that Body of People once called Gods Vineyard, become a Wilderness, and a Den of Thieves, and hath not God made in Gospel-times his Garden out of a Wilderness, and have not they God nigh unto them, and Gods residence among them? and are not they called his People which were not his people? and are not they his dearest sons? and have not those People who were once none of Gods Vineyard, but a barren Wilderness, as Glorious Titles as any in the World? For my own part, I cannot but wonder how it came about that Mr. Mence should separate himself from a National Church, when he proceeds upon such Topicks as renders that Gospel Church national.*

And for his Demonstrations, they are as unconvulsive as his Reasons.

As to the 1st. *God always hath taken Believers seed into Covenant with their parents*: How comes

it to pass then, that some of those in the same Covenant, should be separated as far as Heaven and Hell is distant? as for *Deut. 29. 9, 10, 11, 12.* Which he doth so much tautologize about, and lay so much stress upon, did the Infants, there make a Covenant with God? No; they were not capable so to do; tho' their little ones stood before God, yet they could not make a Covenant: Those who entered into a solemn Oath, which were the Adult, they entered into Covenant with God, no doubt but there was so much goodness in Gods Covenant as was sufficient to lay them all under an Obligation of Obedience, when capable to give it; but no Parents can promise God for their Children, and Covenant they shall be his, so as to obey him.

And for his 2d. Demonst. *Sad experience contradicts it; God hath not confin'd himself, as he supposeth, or else there is nothing in his Argument, to convey all saving good to the Elect, as Infants of Believers; Abraham, Josiah, Abijah, Asa, &c.* all witness against it, and he will find it hard work to prove this to be Gods ordinary way to convey Grace.

His 3d. is Hetrodox, *Because there are many Children which remain in Covenant, tho' their Parents was never therein, and many times the parents remain in the Covenant, and the Children never in Covenant, therefore his Notion is unsound, when he asserts, where God ejects the Parents, and casts them out of Covenant, he casts out the Children also, page 65.* To speak plain, there is no being cast out of the Covenant, Parents nor Children, when once in, for Gods Covenant of Grace is Immutable, as aforesaid. Moreover, it is opposite to that word, where it is said, *that the son should not dye for the Fathers sins*; and upon this head he hath greatly wronged the Apostles sense, *Rom. 11. 17, 19.* In this Chapter the whole body of Believers are compared unto the *Olive-tree*, each Believer to a Branch, which partake of the Root and Fatness of the *Olive-tree*, which is Christ; the grafting in is by Faith, into the invisible Church, not the visible, for the *Gentiles*, tho' wild *Olive-trees* by Nature, yet are grafted in by Faith, while the natural branches are broken off by unbelief; and so the *Abrahamicall* Covenant of circumcision is repealed.

For his 4th. Demonst. *That Children are Members of the visible Church*, is much sooner said than proved, and would make the Gospel-Church national, as others do; if so, he must be

be so kind as to admit not only the immediate Child of a Believer into visible Church-Membership, but their Childrens Children in remote Generations; and that tho' their Parents are never so ungodly, or else he is not true to his own Notion, for thus it was in *Abrahams* Covenant, yea and those of this Principle are obliged from their own Tenet to make their Blacks and Slaves Church members by Baptism, as we said before, yea, all persons bought with their money, for thus *Abraham* was obliged in the Covenant of Circumcision, which he still refers unto; and if they are Members of a Gospel Church its very hard to deny them the Lords Supper, for all them which were baptized continued in the Apostles Doctrine in breaking of Bread and in Prayer, Acts 2. One Ordinance belongs to a Member of Christs Church as well as another, but to assert Infants Members of Christs visible Church is against the Doctrine of the Gospel, who saith such are saints by calling, living stones, not dead ones in Gods spiritual Building, from hence we may see how *Mt. 19. 14.* is wronged by interpreting the Kingdom of Heaven to be the visible Church, and for the greek Word *βέβη* which he doth seem to restrain to little Infants, relying much upon Learned *Beza's* Judgment: I hope he will not prefer him before the Apostle Saint Paul, which he will not only allow was under the guidance of the Spirit as well in the use of Words, as Matter and Argument; neither can he deny that the same Apostle understood the greek as well as *Beza* and knew the common acceptation of Words as then used, and yet he applies the same word *βέβη* to one capable of Understanding, in *2 Tim. 3. 15.* And that from a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, &c. Doth he think he knew them when he was an Infant of eight days old, this will be very hard to persuade his Reader to believe tho' he hath endeavoured it in *pa. 77. 78.* but how pertinently I leave to my Judicious Reader to consider.

As to his 5th. Demonstration I have spoken to on another Head.

And for the 6th. such as it pleased God to account and accept as holy are in Covenant, and this you call a federal Holiness, but by your own Concession it is such a Holiness as may be lodged with them in the Jaws of Hell, therefore it may not improperly be called a federal Holiness, being as light as Feather, instead of a federal, for that in *1 Cor. 7. 14.* It is no more then a legitimate Holiness as will appear in ex-

plaining the Text, the Apostle is giving an Answer unto a Case of Conscience, viz, whether it were lawful for the believing Husband or Wife to leave or depart from the unbelieving Husband or Wife, the Apostle answers in the Negative, by no means, for then every one would account their Children Bastards and unclean, but in continuing together they will be accounted holy, that is legitimate, lawfully begotten in Wedlock, and if he will baptize the Child because tis said it is holy, then the unbelieving Husband or Wife is to be baptized, from the same Argument, because they are said to have the same Holiness and Sanctification, for the unbelieving Wife is sanctified to the Husband, and the Husband to the Wife, in a Matrimonial Way, and it is a very undue Reflection of my Antagonist upon us, as if we supposed that none but Believers Children are legitimate, and none but them have a lawful use of their Children, also how grossly is the sense of *Rom. 11. 16.* perverted, for if the first fruits be holy, the lump is also holy, &c. Whereas tis supposed that all the natural Seed of Believers are holy with their Parents, the Scope of the Apostle there is to shew, that *Abraham* Father of the faithful is the root, not as a natural but a spiritual father, and if we boast our selves of being branches of this root, we must have the faith of our father *Abraham*, for the Text saith, if the Root be holy, so are the Branches, and the grating in here as we said before doth not consist in outward Ordinances, but in saving grace; not in the visible but invisible Church by faith, and none can be called a Father of the faithful, but *Abraham* only, no particular Believer which is but a Branch from this Root can infer they are a holy Root to their posterity, because *Abraham* is called the Father of the faithful, for *Abraham* was a spiritual Father, but we are accounted natural.

For the 7th. Demonst. It would be very happy for Parents and Children if he could prove they had all a Right to the pardon of sin, a new heart, and were all taught of God, and had all of them the pouring out of the holy Spirit and regeneration, and were all the spiritual seed of Israel, which he more than intimates in page 72 1079. and that they shall all know the Lord from the least to the greatest. Let me close this with one Enthymeme, All the Children of Believers are not pardoned nor taught of God, and all have not a new heart and regenerated, nor do all know the Lord by the pouring forth of the holy Spirit upon them, therefore

they are not all in the Covenant of Grace: Oh how falacious is this Argument, for he argues from temporals to spirituals, and from particulars to generals, and misapplies the Promises; for that which God doth promise in special unto *Abraham's* spiritual Seed, is unduely applied unto all the natural Seed of Believers.

For the 8th. Demonst. We have weakned elsewhere.

The 9th. In my handling the 3d. General Head, where I prove the *Covenant of circumcision is repealed*, therefore not transferr'd unto the times of the Gospel, and that answers the 11th. for tho' the Jews were called Gods Sons and Daughters in a Covenant way, while that Covenant stood, yet now it is broken they are only Gods Sons and Daughters by Creation, in common with others; yea, those who were once Covenant-Children, are now Cursed Children: Let my Reader consider, whether this be a good Argument to prove all the Infant Seed of Believers in the Covenant of Grace, because God called them his Sons and Daughters once, who are now under the greatest Curse of any in the World.

His 12th. Demonst. I have turned the Scales, and shewed that gross Absurdities lieth at his door, from his holding all Believers Children in the Covenant of Grace; for it overthrows many fundamental principles of Religion, and for the 1st. he gives in pag. 99. or Reasons why God doth take Believers and their Seed into Covenant, they are as jejune and barren as his Demonstrations, and may be as well improved to the Children and Parents who are Unbelievers.

As to his 1st. Reason, *It is because of the rich and abundant Grace of God*, doth not the Grace of God bring many an Unbeliever and his Child into covenant?

And doth not God reap much glory to his grace by so doing? which is his second.

And doth not God discover his peculiar Love to a poor sinner in his Conversion? which is his third Reason.

Moreover, doth not God lay as good a foundation of Hope for Children of the Unconverted Parent, seeing God often calls them when he passeth by others? and this is his fourth Reason.

And for his fifth and last, *Gods Church is continued in the conversion of the Children of the Ungodly as well as the Godly*; thus you see there is no weight in these Reasons, and wants Cogency, because they are as well improved for the Infants of Unbelievers as the Children

of Believers. I cannot pass the taking Notice of one Inconsistency, he having spent some sheets in labouring to prove the Infant Seed of Believers, as such, in the Covenant of Grace, when he gives you his Reasons, why God doth take Infants into Covenant with their Parents, in his second branch of his second Reason, p. 102. that so by this means he might allure and graciously entice Men and Women to accept of and come under this Covenant; but what need is there for them to come under this Covenant if they are there already? its impertinent for me to desire a Person to come into my House, if he be in the House at the same time, as he supposeth in his arguing those are, who yet are invited to come under it, I hope he will not be angry at this Remark, as he was with my joyning Transubstantiation, Infants-in-covenanting and Infants-habitual-Faith together, had I not thought them near akin I should not have made such an Union; for it doth not appear to the communicant, that the Bread and Wine is transubstantiated into the real Body and Blood of Christ, but yet he takes it to be so by an implicate Faith, the Notion being upheld by the Judgment and Authority of the Romans, called learned, the Laity falls in and believes as the Church believes, without any sensible or rational Demonstration; and for my own part I do seriously profess that the Demonstration is to me equally clear, and I could never yet have it proved either by Scripture, Reason, Experience, nor any other way, that Infants have Faith, or that all the Believers Seed as such are in the Covenant of Grace; and seeing this Covenant of Grace is not intended by you the Election of grace, it is generally I suppose as unintelligible to the People as Transubstantiation. Hear what Mr. Charnock saith upon Infant-habitual-faith, "some say indeed that Regeneration is confer'd in Baptism upon the Elect, and exerts it self afterward in Conversion, but how so active a Principle as a spiritual life should lye dead or asleep so long, even many years which intervene between Baptism and Conversion, is not easily conceivable, &c. Vol. 2. pag. 75, to 39. And saith *Agustin* "if we should go about to demonstrate by Words, that Children know the things of God, who as yet know not the things of Men, I fear we should offer Wrong to our very Senses. I shall give one Argument and pass it.

Argu. Those Children of Believers which died in an unregenerate State, either never had the

Habits of Grace, or else if they had them they have lost them, but there is no losing Habits of Grace, therefore they never had them; if you say they had them, and have lost them, that is against your own Principle about Perseverance; if you say they never had them, then you contradict your own Assertion.

Moreover, what a stir he makes in *pag. 123, 124, &c.* Because I say the Holy Scriptures was written for the Adult, and not for Infants, the Reason of this Assertion was, that when my Antagonist brought the Commission, *Mark 16. 15, 16. Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned:* When this Scripture was brought for the baptizing of Infants, and for Infants habitual-Faith, say I, when Christ gave this Commission, were the Apostles to preach this to little Infants, that they were to believe upon Penalty of Damnation? and then I argue, if none are here intended in *Mark 16.* but Men and Women capable to hear, and actually to believe the Gospel of Christ, then Infants and Infant-habitual-Faith is not here intended, but the former is true, and therefore the latter; now my Antagonist should have consider'd the Grammatical Difference between of and for, for tho' I grant the Scripture often speaks of Infants, and so of our Saviour, yet my Argument stands still untouched, that the Holy Gospel was never intended to be preach't unto Infants as such, and therefore his five or six Scriptures in *page 124.* are not pertinently used, for who ever deny'd, but that many Scriptures may speak of them, tho' never intended to be preach't in that state unto them, see the *Antidote* proved a Counterfeit, *pag. 3.*

And let my Antagonist know, that its very unfairly as well as groundlessly suggested in *page 128.* as if *John Baptist* baptized before Persons repented, because it is said *Mat. 3. 11. I baptize unto Repentance;* the Reason of that Phrase and *Mark 1. 4.* Where his Baptism is called the Baptism of Repentance, that is, God command'd him to demand Repentance of all who were baptized, and *Faith also in him who was to come, Acts 19.* And upon this *John* did preach unto them the Remission of Sins, the Scope of the place sheweth they were to repent before they were baptized, because when the *Pharisees* and *Saducees* came to his Baptism, saith he, *Oh Generation of Vipers, bring forth fruits meet for Repentance,* or unto, or according to the

Nature of true Repentance, and then you are fit Subjects; and no doubt but Repentance is the every days work of a Christian, after a Subjection to this Ordinance so much commended. These things considered, Mr. Mence had little reason to suggest they had no Repentance antecedent to this Ordinance, or else why doth he say, "Covenant Blessings are either conveyed when Baptism is administered or after, as, saith he, *John* did baptize unto Repentance."

And whereas he assumes the Throne of the most high, in passing Sentence upon me, as a confident, ignorant, proud Person, do not these passages smell stronger of such Vice? when he tells us, *page 127.* "That I shut out Children out of the Covenant, and proceed upon such ways as inevitably shuts them out of the Kingdom of God, taking off Presents from all ground of Hope concerning the Eternal Happiness of dying Infants, and also send them by swarms into Hell: I suppose it is the Opinion of all Divines Orthodox, that it never was in the power of any Creature to bring any into the Covenant of Grace, or to shut any out: *St. Paul* saith, *the Election hath obtained it;* for to say I can shut Persons out of the Covenant of Grace, is as if you should say, I can damn whom I please, or them whom God would save, I believe *St. Paul's* Words are true, *that God will have mercy on whom he will,* then how can we shut any out of the Covenant of Grace? as there is not one more in this Covenant than God hath decreed shall be, so there is not one less, how then can we shut them out? Oh what Trash is this to come from a Guide and a Leader! can any man reverse Gods Eternal Decrees, Councils and Purposes? No, no; *God worketh all things after to the Councils of his own Will,* and doth all his Pleasure by this means; Christ may be a King without a Kingdom, a Head without a Body, and the Eternal Transactions about Mans Salvation may be made void, if Men can shut Souls out of the Covenant of Grace; and if Baby-Baptism gives him such great Hopes of dying Infants happiness, we have a better foundation of Hope for our dying Babies, namely, the Imputation of *Christ's Righteousness;* and I am sure then they cannot want Holiness: But in this Notion doth not Mr. Mence symbolize too much with the Romans, who Anathematized all that said Baptism did not wash away Original Sin? and

it is impossible that such as are clothed in Christs Righteousness should go by swarms into Hell, so it will be as difficult to keep such out of Heaven, what should be the Reason that my Antagonist should dress up his Neighbour thus in a Bears-skin, unless it were to have him baited, for he well knew nothing could more raise the Hearts of affectionate poor Women who had buried their Children against me then to tell them my Judgment shut them out of Heaven, and sent them by swarms into Hell.

And he hath not contented himself to deal thus unjustly with my single Person, but in several places reflects upon others Conversation, as if they wanted the power of Godliness; perhaps this is too much wanting in all the Churches of Christ, but its good for every man to look at home, he knows who said, *Judge not that you be not judged, and with what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again. First cast out the Beam out of thine own Eye and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the Mote out of thy Brothers Eye.*

He saith page 117. *It's brought in as a great Objection against Infant-Baptism, that there is no Command for it, and I think a very material Objection it is, if we consider that all instituted Worship such as Baptism is, depends upon a positive Command and whereas he tells us they have a Command by consequence, for Infant-Baptism, he can never prove it as long as he lives, besides how pertinent it is to talk of a Consequential Command I leave to the Reader. But what need is there to go about to prove an Ordinance of Christ by a dark uncertain consequence, when God hath given us a plain and positive Command? and were Mr. Mence to try a Title for a good Estate, he would presently produce his plain and positive Evidence for it, and have little Regard to Circumstantial Proof, unless there were no other; but blessed be God we have a sure foundation for Believers Baptism, no less than the great Law-givers Commission, and therefore he might have forborn those Instances he brings to prove things by consequence because they do not only want Cogency, having a plain Command for the premises, but may be of ill consequence; and were it my Business I could prove the Consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and the Deity of the Holy Ghost by better proof than consequences, which he seems for to deny can*

be done, and as it is beneath a rational being to insist upon Circumstances when positive proof is at hand to clear any temporal Concern, Oh how much more reasonable it is for to part with that practice which is confessedly upheld by consequence! and fall in without carrying with that Practice which hath thus saith the Lord for it.

For that Text *Act. 3. 25.* which Mr. Mence frequently runs unto as to a strong Bulwark, *Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made unto our fathers, saying to Abraham, even in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the Earth be blessed.* From which Text he concludes that all the Children of Believers are in the Covenant of Grace, but how little this Scripture makes for that purpose you will see in my opening the Text. Indeed, saith Peter, you are the Offspring of the Prophets and the Patriarch Abraham, with whom God made a Covenant and Promise, that in his Seed, namely, the Lord Christ, all the kindreds of the Earth should be blessed, but how unlike are you to your father Abraham who rejoiced to see this day, and by faith saw it and was glad, but now God hath made good his Covenant and Promise unto Abraham in giving this Saviour, and you to have the Prerogative of the first Offer of his Grace to save your Soul, but instead of believing on him you have wickedly killed him, you the Offspring and Children of the Patriarch Abraham of whom ye boast, but in this you have been more like the Devil, for which you have cause to repent, *v. 19. That your sins may be blotted out,* but if you Children of the Prophets and Patriarchs should miscarry, the Lord Christ will not lose the End of his coming, for in him shall all the kindreds of the Earth be blessed, tho' the Children of the Kingdom should be cast out for their Abomination, for in the next verse he tells them they were Children of Iniquity, and that Jesus was sent to turn them from their Wickedness; my Reader I suppose will conclude him a very wise Man that can prove from this Text all the Children of Believers in the Covenant of Grace, because this Promise and Covenant mentioned in this Text is that special and peculiar Promise God made unto Abraham concerning the Messiah, and not to all the natural Seed of Believers; its not said I make a Covenant with thee and all thy natural Offspring, but I enter into a Covenant with thee, that in thy seed the Lord Jesus,

not only those who believe among the *Jews* shall be happy, but all the Kindreds in the Earth shall be equally blessed upon believing, forasmuch as under the Gospel God maketh no difference between *Jew* and *Gentile* when the Heart is purified by faith, Acts 25. 9.

One Mystery I would have unfolded if he write, that is, that sometimes 'tis said Infants are baptized, because they are in Covenant, at other times its said, they are baptized to bring them into Covenant.

And in his calling a Church of Christ a Schism, and the Minister thereof the Head of an Overgrown Schism, he considered not how he hath made himself obnoxious to the Censure of others, I may be sorry he is now to learn that every Separation is not a Schism, for in this doth he not condemn *Calvin* and *Luther* and many others, who separated from the Church of *Rome*, yea and the Church of *England* also; oh how many of the generation of the righteous doth he here condemn. Moreover doth he not condemn himself and all the godly Independants and Presbyterians who did conscientiously separate from the Church of *England*. Men that write had need consider well before hand what they put forth into the World, and not let crude, undigested matter be the Object of their Eye, he knows how the Papists condemn the Church of *England* for Schism, and the Church of *England* all the Dissenters for Schism, and is it not very hard we should condemn each other who have suffered together from the same common Enemy.

Thus I have done with my Answer unto Mr. *Mence* and now Reader I have one Request to thee, if there be any Answer made to this Book, be not put off with Shadows instead of Substance, with Words instead of Arguments; you have reasonable Souls, do not suffer yourselves therefore to be imposed upon, but be like the noble *Bereans*, to search the Scriptures, to see whether the thing be so or no: And this I have to say to Mr. *Mence*, that if he shall respond, I do expect not only an Epitomizing of my Book of Baptism, and this, &c. as he tells you he may do, but I expect an Answer to all my Arguments, or to the Argumentative Part of my Books, Paragraph after Paragraph, as I have done to his, and who ever else shall undertake to answer me, if this aforesaid be not done, I shall not reckon my self obliged to make any Reply, or to take any considerable Notice of it,

and that this may be done, the Respondent is to consider that both the Church and the World will have the sight of it, and therefore it will be to no Mans Honour to give the go by to the Arguments levelled against Baby-Baptism.

The Substance of Mr. Michael Harrison's Book, Entituled Infant-Baptism God's Ordinance, hath been Answered in the Answer to Vindiciæ Fœderis, and now I shall Answer what remains.

MR. *Harrison* in page 3d. tells us, that this Abrahamic Covenant in *Gen. 17. 7.* is an Everlasting, perpetual and eternal Covenant, a Covenant to last for evermore, so the Hebrew Word *עולם* *Gnolam* properly signifieth saith he, but I suppose this Gentleman knows, that this very Hebrew Word is often used by the Holy Ghost to signify a certain Period of Time, and not Eternity always, and therefore it doth his cause no Service; the legal Oeconomy and Priesthood is called *Gnolam*, an Everlasting Priesthood, *Exod. 40. 15.* Which he believes is put an End to by the great High-priest Jesus Christ, it is the same Everlasting that the *Jews* Possession of *Canaan* was to be, *Gen. 17. 8.* Which is now inhabited by the *Mahumetans*, yea, its the same *Gnolam*, Everlasting, that Circumcision had, *Gen. 17. 13.* and as he believes Circumcision is abolished, tho' called Everlasting, and the *Jews* disinherited of *Jerusalem*, tho' given for an Everlasting Possession, for the same reason he may conclude the *Gnolam*, Everlasting, in the 7th. v. hath an End also and that Covenant of Peculiarity broken with *Abraham's* Natural Seed, which was signified by the breaking the Staff of Beauty and Bands, *Zach. 11. 10, 11, 12.*

In page 4. he gives us the nature of the Covenant of Grace, wherein he tell us, "its Gods gracious Promise of delivering from a state of Sin and Death, and bringing into a state of Salvation by Jesus Christ, all that by faith fly to and lay hold on him." Surely the Gentleman hath forgot himself in the definition of the Covenant.