

# The Athenian Mercury.

Saturday, November 28. 1691.

**W**E can't but look upon it as a particular Providence, that in our late Paper about Infant Baptism, we deliver'd our Assertions a little darkly, because there-  
we have encouraged the Anabaptists to speak not only very confi-  
dently of their Tenets, in their Animadversions upon our Positi-  
on, but that they have now given us to understand wherein all  
their strength lies: So that we are now the better enabled to speak  
to the matter in hand, both by exposing their Tenets, and  
saving our selves from the weak Objections they have rais'd a-  
gainst us; and we doubt not but to act so candidly and mildly  
towards them, that not only themselves, (if not extraordinarily prejudic'd)  
every other unsatisfied Reader will have a clear and distinct  
view of the differences betwixt us, even to an acknowledg-  
ment of the Truth.

Upon our First Question (paraph. first of your Paper,) we  
urge, that we prove not, that whole Families were baptized  
the proselyted Gentiles in their Initiation among the Jews.

We answer, our Paper was small, but we'll confirm it now,  
since you seem to desire it; and first in this particular. Ter-  
tullian de Baptismo, Cap. 18. *Profectura igitur Juridica quæ  
Baptismus preerat profectus ipse Majoræ legis Legem Mo-  
ysi servaturum.* Such as cou'd not answer themselves,  
did profess or promise by Major Domo's or Sponsors to keep  
the Law of Moses. A Stranger that is circumcised, (saith Mai-  
monides) and not baptized, or that is baptized and not circumci-  
sed, is not a Proselyte till he be both baptized and circumcised.  
But to put all out of doubt, since the Jews themselves are  
the best Witnesses, you shall find the Rabbi's Expositions up-  
on Ex. 19. 8. and Gen. 35. 2. If he have not a Father, and his  
Mother bring the Child to be proselyted, they baptize him because  
there is no proselyte without Circumcision and Baptism. Hence it  
follows that a Jewish Proselyte is called *βεβαμμένος*, a Baptized per-  
son; all which considered, sufficiently clears this Head.

As to the Second Head in the same paragraph about Bap-  
tism, being the Antitype of Circumcision, wherein ye say,  
we affirm, but not confirm it, but rather give away our Cause  
and say that it was not properly a Type, but rather a Continuation  
of a Custom: What we said we shall prove, and then let the  
World judge who has given away the Cause. 'Tis not ab-  
solutely necessary that the Type and Antitype should agree in  
every thing. Isaac was a Type of our Saviour, he was the  
promised Seed, so was our Saviour; he was the only begot-  
ten Son of his Father, so was our Saviour; he was brought  
up in Mount Moriah to be offer'd, and so was our Saviour; Isaac  
carried the Wood, so our Saviour carried the Cross, but he  
was not really offer'd after all, but our Saviour was: Nor was  
Isaac intentionally a Sacrifice for any, our Saviour actually was  
for the Sins of the whole World. 'Tis enough to our purpose  
that Circumcision was a Mark of distinction from the Gen-  
tile World, as Baptism is a Badge to distinguish betwixt  
Christians and Heathens: That as Circumcision was a Seal of  
the Covenant betwixt God and his People then, so is Baptism  
now. Thus we see they agree in all the Substantials, and  
what they differ, there may be a special reason given for

To prove this further, An Ordinance once enjoy'd and  
never repeal'd, is always in force, but the Ordinance of Childrens  
baptizing was once in the Old Testament enjoy'd, and was  
never repeal'd, Ergo, 'tis yet in force; if the Anabaptists  
say not, let them shew where. This shews yet the Analogy  
betwixt Baptism and Circumcision: Again, the privileges of  
the Gospel are not only to as many as the Lord shall call  
from afar off, but also to Believers and their Children. Acts  
39. And 'twas also thus under the old Covenant of Circumcision;  
but to come to the Exposition of that Text, which YE have so  
strangely perverted, viz. In whom also ye were Circumcised with  
Circumcision made without hands, in putting off the Body of  
Sins of the Flesh by the Circumcision of Christ, having been  
baptized with him in Baptism. The scope of the Apostle here  
is to take off the Colossians from the Rudiments of the world,  
especially Circumcision, which troubled most of the Church-  
men therefore he saith, ye are compleat in him, being Circum-  
cised with the Circumcision made without hands: But they might  
as well say, We want the outward Circumcision to us and our Children,  
which was of singular use to the Jews to strengthen their Faith —  
The Apostle answereth, Ye are buried with him in Baptism, or  
are in Effect Circumcised because Baptiz'd; for Baptism  
supplies the place of Circumcision, and is every way as ad-  
vantageous to you — See the Expositions of the Fathers, and

Apostles added to Baptism what was necessary to make it an Anti-  
type of Circumcision, but that we say never a word what it is —  
Answer, 'tis your prejudice, or inadvertence, for you'll find  
it in Emphatick Italick in the same paragraph, if you please  
to read it over again.

A little further, as also in the fourth Colume, you put a  
Dilemma upon us, to know what we mean by the Covenant,  
and whether Remission or Salvation is sealed to the Infant; for  
the Covenant, see at large Heb. 8. and Jer. 31. which we  
have not room to paraphrase on, nor need we, since we think  
we are already agreed upon't as to adult Persons. As to the  
latter, whether Children receive Remission of Sins and Salva-  
tion by Baptism: We answer, Yes, as sure as adult Persons, viz.  
both of 'em Conditionally, and no otherwise, for what signi-  
fies Baptism to an adult Baptist, if he forfeits his Conditions,  
as little we are sure as the Baptism of Children: So that there's  
as much a Sealing of a Blank to Apostatizing Adult Persons,  
as to non-performing Children when they become capable.

You seem to be angry that we urge, a Continuance of a Cu-  
stom was the likeliest way to find Encouragement, adding by  
way of Interrogation, that the Gospel was not calculated to  
please mens humours: We'll grant it, but there's a deal of dif-  
ference between gratifying Converts in some Circumstantial, and  
choosing Methods to comply with Wickedness; pray read  
the Counsel of the Elders at Jerusalem, which was sent to the  
Gentiles, as also St. Pauls Condescension both to Jew and  
Gentile to win both.

Under the Second Question you father a false Translation  
upon us, about the words of the Commission, *μαθητεύσατε*  
*πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*, rendring *μαθητεύσατε*, Teach ye, and then ask-  
ing us whether Children can be taught, how unfair such  
an arguing is: This Noted, we refer all the World to our  
first Exposition, which we shall ever stand by; to wit, *Disciple*  
*all Nations, Baptizing and teaching 'em*, &c. where baptizing  
goes before teaching; and with this order of Doctrine that  
of St. John the Baptist agrees, *Mark 1. John did Baptize in the*  
*Desert, preaching the Baptism of Repentance.* And hereby the by, our  
Antagonists do well in passing over the Faith of Fairus for his  
Daughter, which shows, that believing Parents Faith avails  
for their Children, as likewise the Syriac Translation in the  
Example of the Taylor, *Baptizatus est ipse cum omnibus filiis do-*  
*mus sue.* But there's no disputing with such Persons as e-  
vade what they can't tell what to do with, and when they are  
put to't, for all their pretensions to the Letter of the Scrip-  
ture, have the Confidence upon Dr. Taylor's words, to deny  
our Saviours, who assures us, that Children have Faith, *Mat.*  
*18. 3, 4, 5. compared with Mat. 9. 36. also Mat. 18. He that*  
*offendeth one of these little ones which believe in me, &c.* We  
would ask whether that passage, *They brought little Children*  
*to him, and that, Suffer little Children to come unto me, &c.* be  
spoken definitely or indefinitely; if definitely, let 'em show  
what Children are exempted; if indefinitely, the Case is plain  
on our side. Besides, in seeking to evade this, in Colume the  
Fourth, (for we must follow 'em from place to place for one Argu-  
ment) they would have no Children proselyted but such as  
Timothy, who from a Child had known the Scripture: To which  
we answer, that according to the Original, those Children  
which did *εἰσέλθαι εἰς*, or *εἰσελθεῖν*, were such as were  
brought to our Saviour, and he took 'em in his Arms, therefore  
they were too little to go themselves.

A great deal of Paper is spent to prove (tho' it does not  
do it) that the word *all Nations* does not belong to every in-  
dividual person: There's no Body ever took it in any other  
sence but this, *That of all Languages, Tongues and Nations,*  
*some should be Discipled and made Christians,* and not all of all  
Nations, for the Gospel spread by degrees, and was never in its  
Purity in all places at once.

In the Second Paragraph, Colume the Fourth, You come over  
us with your old Exposition, and won't admit of any other:  
what reason have we to believe such an Exposition as has  
been contrary to the sence of the Primitive Church? The  
Ancient Fathers believ'd, that federal Holiness of Parents made  
their Children Candidates for Baptism — Take one among  
the rest. *Tert. de Animo. c. 39. Hic enim & Apostolus ex Sacra-*  
*tificatio alterutro Sexu sanctos procreavit ait, tam ex seminis pre-*  
*rogativa, &c.*

We would ask those Anabaptists, Whether Children ever  
were in Covenant? Whether they can show where they are  
put out of it? Whether there's not as much right to their



of Female Baptism. How the Faith of the Parent can put the Child further off from God? How Children can lose by Christs coming, who came to take away the Sin of the World? which most interpret Original Sin. But to put all out of doubt, Children are holy, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven; But Holiness comes by the Operation of the Holy Spirit, and who can forbid Water to such as receive the Holy Spirit, that they shou'd not be baptized? Again, the Covenant is not alter'd at all as to Children, from what it was in Circumcision; God said to Abraham, I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed: Which compared with Gal. 3. 14. and 17. That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, &c. This I say therefore, that the Covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ before the Law, which was 430 years after cannot disannul, that it shou'd make the Promise of none effect. See that Exposition of this place by St. Peter, in his Sermon to the Jews upon the day of Pentecost, viz. The Promise is to you and your Children; and all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, agreeable to other Texts: To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile — and many more such Texts, that show believing Gentiles have the same Prerogative as to Incovenanting, as the promis'd Seed of Abraham, viz. both Parents and Children.

The next is about the Universal Consent of Churches for Infant Baptism: You tell us you never read in Holy Writ, that any of the Churches in Asia consented to Infant Baptism — What a miserable shift is this! because the Scripture is not an Universal History, for to speak of every thing, therefore nothing else is to be believ'd; but 'tis in vain to speak more of it, since you tell us *Volume 3.* that you may be as well perswaded to believe Transubstantiation and Purgatory, as those things which the Divine Rule has no Tongue to speak; pray why do you believe there were such Persons as Alexander the Great, Cato, Hannibal &c. or why do ye believe Infant Baptism was introduc'd into the Church some hundred years after our Saviour, when the Scripture does not mention it? Once more we referr your Second Thoughts to what we have said upon this Subject: you tell us, that the Churches in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Galatia, Philippi, Coloss, Samaria, Casarea, were all for Baptizing the Adult: — We grant it, but 'twas such adult Persons as came over from the Heathen — We challenge you to prove that any one of those Churches did not also Baptize Infants.

As to that paragraph which pretends to enervate and weaken the Testimonies of the Fathers, tho' we have yet better, which we shall show anon, and such as are unquestionable: We appeal to any disinterested Persons, whether there's any thing more than Suspicion, and begging of Questions, and not any proof at all; therefore what we have offer'd, must and will stand till better arguments are found out.

But you seem to make a stir that we shou'd say there never was a particular Congregation of Anabaptists till above 300 Years after our Saviour: But since this won't please you, we'll prove that there was so far from being any particular Congregation of 'em then, that there never was any one Person that oppos'd Infant Baptism, till 380 Years after our Saviour. Auxentius the Arrian was the first; prove any Patron of your Sect before him if you can: We'll give you Authority for what we here assert. — *Anabaptismi institutio non Nupera & nova est, sed ante Annos quoque Mille trecentos turbas in Ecclesia dedit Gravissimas, & tantum virium acquisivit ut hujus seculi nostri conatus, tantum lusus adhuc si cum illo conferatur, videri possit interim, tamen Divinae veritatis telis nunc quoque expugnatus & plane dejectus est.* Zuingl. de Pedobapt.

You affirm, 'Tis well known, that Augustine was the first that preached Infant Baptism necessary. 'Tis a great mistake, read Clemens Romanus, Lib. 6. c. 19. βαπτίζετε & υμῶν τὰ νήπια, &c. Baptize your Infants, and Educate them in the discipline and admonition of God, &c. and a little after he gives this Reason, There is this difference betwixt baptiz'd and unbaptiz'd Infants, that baptiz'd Infants enjoy the good things of Baptism, which those that are not baptiz'd do not enjoy; and that they enjoy them by the Faith of those who offer them to Baptism. This we hope was long enough before St. Austin. — Polycarp was the Disciple of St. John, and Irenaeus was his Disciple, who tells us in several of his Works, (particularly Ep. Irenaei ad Florinum, adv. Heres. l. 3. c. 3. l. 5. c. 33. Epist. ad Florinum lib. 9. Cap. 39.) that he conversed with several Ancient Presbyters that had lived in the Apostles times, of whom he had enquired after the Apostles practices: And yet we are sure from him as well as his Contemporary Tertullian, that Infant Baptism was then of General practice in the Church: Your Animadversions upon the third Question deserve no thoughts, the Summ of it being treated on all along.

In Question the fourth you are troubled about our Saviours Baptism at 30 years of Age, and ask, Why he was not baptiz'd when an Infant? We have given you one Reason already, and offer now another, viz. Because he was a Jew; profelyted Heathens were only Baptiz'd by Ayuntamiento de Madrid proved above.

In the fifth Question you tell us, we have done partly and partly foul, about the Modus of Baptism: We answer, you were not pleas'd to accept of our Compliance before, further offer, That the Original does not signifie to Dip; 'tis rather word, see John 13. 26. ἐμβαλῆς τὸν Ἰουδῆν. This shows that it signifies only a bare and sleight washing; dipping, and washing are very distinct, see Exod. 15. 4. 5. ἐμβύδων, this difference did the Greek Writers make betwixt baptizing and plunging under water, and they were certainly best Judges of their own propriety of Language: See Beza's *Mattheum* — The ancient Oracles of the Athenians, βαπτίζῃ σουαί σου εἰς δευτερεῖα; Baptize or wash him as a Jew in water, but do not drown him. In short, consult all Authorities and you'll find that βαπτίζῃ signifies to dip or plunge, but εἰς τὸ βαπτίζῃ or wash. So that if the manner it self were absolutely necessary, we have it nearer than you; but we think it not very material, and therefore all the long Harangues that you make afterwards, is upon wrong Supposition, and therefore too impertinent to the matter in hand to be further considered by us.

In your Close, you say, we reproach you, in saying your Ringleaders came to ill Deaths, and repented of their Notions, they dyed; alledging, so was our Saviour, and so was St. Paul. We answer, Truth is no reproach — Our Saviour and St. Paul were abus'd, but falsly, nothing cou'd be fastened upon them, or prov'd against 'em, but we can prove what we say, and have done already: But since you desire more, take it; Munster first of your Sect in Germany, at the point of Death did acknowledge his Error, his Mind being exceedingly cast down so that he was not able to give an Account of his Faith. To mention one other. John Bercold of Leiden said, That the Gospel had been long enough offer'd, that from thenceforth who had rejected it, were to be killed by a Material Sword. See Winters Treatise of Infant Baptism, p. 174. Beza said of some *Quidam illorum, &c.* Some of 'em deserve pity rather than punishment. And Erasmus said, *Anabaptistas Commiseratione, &c.* The Anabaptists deserve pity, as Offenders that sinn'd more by Ignorance than Malice: But if you have a Mind to see the Tragical End of several of your Ringleaders, read the latter part of my view of all Religions, and you'll find enough unhappy Patterns of this Erroneous Doctrine.

To conclude, What we have here Writ, is not so much to vex you, as to convince you, and such unthinking persons as want of Judgment may be byas'd by your Doctrines — I vvou'd caution ye, as you vwill answer it at the day of Judgment, not to be covetous of other peoples Ruines, by disturbing the Church of Christ with a false Doctrine, lest ye live for others sins. Think on Sir Tho. Moors words, who those doubtfull Errors he held in his Youth, was come to be Heretical, if it shou'd prove to be so, without a party, or the selying of others to his Opinion. We protest seriously, that what is here offer'd, is not out of Prejudice or Passion, but that we are really perswaded is and vwill be found Authentick and Warrantable at the Great Day of Tryal, and we hope ye will accept it as such at our hands. If ye are yet further dissatisfied in any thing, let all your Arguments be drawn systematically up, without running long Divisions, and needless paraphrases, and you shall have your Answers with all Sincerity and Candor imaginable. We heartily wish your Judgment enlightened and rectified to the acknowledgment of the Truth it is in Jesus.

The following Postscript was transmitted to us by an unknown Hand.

#### POSTSCRIPT.

It will ever redound to the Honour of Mr. Eliot of New-England that he was so very earnest for the bringing poor Children into the Bond of the Covenant, that he very openly and earnestly maintain'd the Cause of Infant Baptism against a sort of persons since the Reformation, who forget that in the Gospel Church State, as well as in the Jewish, the Promise is to Believers and their Children, and are unwilling to reckon Children among the Disciples of Jesus Christ, or to grant that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven; or to know, that the most undoubted Rule of Antiquity affirm Infant Baptism to have been an usage in all Primitive Churches; that even before the early days of Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Basil, Athanasius, Epiphanius, in the Greek, and Ambrose, Jerom, Austin in the Latin Church, all which give glorious Testimonies for Infant Baptism; even Origen before these, assures us, that in his days there was no doubt of it; and Origen before him could say, 'twas from the Apostles that the Church took up the Baptism of Infants; and Clemens Romanus before him could say, That Children should be Receivers of the Discipline of Christ; besides what plain Evidence we have in Irenaeus and Justin Martyr; and that the very Arguments with which some of the Ancients did superstitiously delay of Baptism, do at the same time confess the Divine Right of Infants in it.

The Proposals for the Young Students Library, are