

## **II. BABY BELIEF BEFORE BAPTISM IN THE ANTE-NICENE CHURCH**

In our previous chapter, we have examined the teaching anent baby belief before baptism within the covenant of redemption -- according to the inspired and therefore infallible written Word of God. In this present chapter, we shall see that even the fallible and uninspired ancient history of Intertestamental Judaism and of Early Heathenism -- and especially that of the Early Patristic Church -- sustain the above viewpoint.

Before the fall, God graciously brought man into covenant with Him at his very creation (in adulthood). Consequently, man then had the right to commune with Him at the tree of life. Had man not fallen, his children would have grown up aright -- and then communed. Genesis 1:26f & 2:7-9; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Hosea 6:7.

Right after the fall, God cleansed elect mankind. He initiated man and woman into the covenant of redemption. This He did first by cleansing and then by clothing them -- and, when born, also their children. Indeed, God subsequently enabled them to commune with Him -- through a God-given sacrifice. Genesis 3:11-21 & 4:1-4 with Galatians 3:27-29.

Later yet, God cleansed backslidden but penitent covenanters by sprinkling them with rainwater -- during the 'baptism' of the great flood. Thereafter, this was followed by sacrificial communion. Genesis 6:18 & 7:10f with First Peter 3:20f and Genesis 8:20-22.

The above -- cleansing, ingrafting and communion -- is indeed the pattern of all religion. Thus, the sons of Jacob were both cleansed and circumcised -- before communion with God. Also the later intertestamental Judaists observed this same order -- even when proselytizing converts from Paganism. For they first 'baptismally' sprinkled them, and then circumcised them -- before admitting them to their communion.

Greek Pagans stole these rites from the Hebrews, and then perverted them. In their 'mystery religions' those Pagans then themselves -- first cleansed and then initiated candidates, and only thereafter communed with them. Indeed, the cleansing rites of both later Judaism and later Paganism 'magically' devolved --from proto-sprinkling -- toward final submersionism *ex opere operato*.

### **63. The development of proselyte baptism among the ancient Hebrews**

Already in the time of Jacob, there was mention of the circumcising of pagan Proselytes -- and the 'baptismal' cleansing (alias the washing) of Israelites tainted by contact with such Pagans. Thus, the sons of Jacob told the Shechemites: "If you wish to be as we, that every male of you be circumcised -- then we will take your daughters to us and we will dwell with you and we will become one people.... Then Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, 'Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be cleansed!'" Genesis 34:15f & 35:2f.

At the exodus, only those who had been both cleansed by sprinkling and also circumcised and catechized -- were to partake of the Passover communion. Thus, at the Red Sea, the Israelites and their infants were 'baptized' by sprinkling -- while the 'uncircumcised' Egyptians were drowned (by submersion).

Those Israelites then "washed their clothes" when entering into the Sinai covenant -- soon to be followed by a communion sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, there are also later Biblical accounts of (proselyte) 'baptisms' of converted pagans -- like Naaman and Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>2</sup>

Further, 'Intertestamental Judaism' (from perhaps at least B.C. 400 onward) clearly baptized even the infants of Proselytes. This occurred whenever whole families were converted from Paganism to the religion of Ancient Israel.

The great Anglican Scholar Rev. Dr. William Wall has well summarized this,<sup>3</sup> in his famous work *The History of Infant Baptism*, as follows. "1) The Jews baptized all Proselytes of the nations that were converted to their religion. 2) Their proof from Moses' Law that they ought to do so [was: Genesis 35:2; Exodus 19:10; Numbers 15:15]. 3) They baptized also the infant children whom the Proselytes brought along with them to be entered into the covenant of the true God. 4) They baptized all such infant children of the Heathens as they found or took in war *etc.* 5) The great light that this gives for the better understanding [of] the meaning of our Saviour's commission to baptize the nations, [is obvious.] Matthew 28:19. 6) The testimony of St. Ambrose...that John the Baptist baptized infants [is clear].... 7) A parallel [was thus] instituted between the Jewish and Christian baptism."

#### **64. The derivation of the cleansing rites of ancient Paganism**

Now even the ancient heathen religions surrounding Palestine themselves often 'borrowed' from the Old Testament -- and even from early Christianity and yet later Judaism. They generally did so, however, without acknowledgment; and they then always perverted whatever they thus borrowed.

Chronologically, some of the early Pagans did precede the advent of New Testament Christianity. Indeed, their very apostasy from the yet earlier revelation of the one true Triune God -- even helped set the stage for Christianity as their needed correction.

Yet even such Pagans could only survive on the 'borrowed capital' they had stolen from the true religion revealed in the garden of Eden and thereafter. That was later augmented -- in the normative way described especially in the Older and Newer Testaments of Holy Scripture.

Certainly in the Near East, babies were sometimes initiated even into some of the ancient religions of the Pagans.<sup>4</sup> The same was true even of some of the heathen Greek 'mystery religions.'<sup>5</sup>

Oepke and Leipoldt have demonstrated<sup>6</sup> that "both in the Hellenistic environment as well as in Judaism, circumstances were at work which might induce also the Primitive Church to baptize children." Indeed, Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria and Gregory of Nazianzen

(and other Patristic Fathers too) all claimed<sup>7</sup> that Pre-Christian ancient Paganism itself -- had borrowed massively from (and perverted) both Old Testament religion and intertestamental Judaism.

#### **65. Early Judaism: the 'fallen who had been justified' were 'righteous' before circumcision**

Not just the Old Testament Israelites realized that the godly ancient Patriarchs and Proselytes were justified before and irrespective of their being circumcised. So too did even later rabbinical Judaism -- at least in the early phases of the intertestamentary half-millennium (from B.C. 450 till 50 A.D.).

These teachers, following Genesis 6:5 and 8:21 &c --realized<sup>8</sup> that all Adamites and even the 'righteous' Noah and his family had previously been tainted with an evil tendency ever since their birth or even their conception. Yet Early Judaism also realized that at least Noah and probably too his covenant family had been "just[ified]" before their 'baptism' -- during the 'cleansing' of the great flood.<sup>9</sup>

Judaism further realized that even Abraham and his family had been born in sin. They therefore needed to be "justified" before their circumcision -- whether as adult males, or whether as baby boys just eight days old.<sup>10</sup>

In the Old Testament *Greek Apocrypha*, a passage in Jesus Sirach -- certainly written in its present form no later than B.C. 132 -- reads as follows: "To fear the Lord is the beginning of **wisdom**, and it is created with the faithful in the womb. This [wisdom] prepared an everlasting dwelling-place with [godly] men, and will continually remain with their seed. To fear the Lord is fullness of wisdom, and that drenches them with its fruits."

Here,<sup>11</sup> the above phrase "prepared...an everlasting dwelling-place" translates the verb *nosseuō*. Thus the meaning appears to be that wisdom 'nests' in wise and faithful humans -- even from the womb onward. The Lange/Bissell *Commentary on the Apocrypha of the Old Testament* here observes: "Perhaps the early beginning of wisdom is meant here..., in accordance with the Jewish philosophy, as in Psalm 51:7" (*cf.* 51:5).

#### **66. Proselyte baptism in the pseudepigraphical *Testament of Levi***

There seems to be a reference to the development of the practice of Judaic proselyte baptism also in the *circa* 110 B.C. pseudepigraphical *Testament of Levi*. There, in a semi-Messianic story which Jacob's immediate son Levi is alleged to have told his own immediate children, we read the following.

"I counselled my father and Reuben my brother to bid the sons of Hamor not to be circumcised. For I was zealous because of the abomination which they had wrought on my sister.... My father heard these [latter] things and was wroth, and he was grieved in that they had received the circumcision -- and, after that, had been put to death [Genesis 34:24-31]....

"Then I saw seven men in white raiment saying to me: 'Arise, put on the robe of the priesthood and the crown of righteousness! ... From henceforth, become a priest of the Lord -- you and your seed for ever!'

"Then the first anointed me with holy oil.... The second washed me with pure water [Genesis 35:1-2 *cf.* Exodus 24:6f to 29:4f]....

"Then they said to me...: 'Every desirable thing in Israel shall be for you and for your seed'.... Then Isaac called me...and said to me...: 'While you are young, take therefore to yourself a wife without blemish or pollution but not of the race of strange nations -- and bathe before entering into the holy place!'"

The *Testament of Levi* continues: "Now, my children, I command you! Fear the Lord your God with your whole heart, and walk in simplicity according to all His Law! Thus you must teach also your children -- so that they may have understanding all their life, reading the Law of God incessantly.... Sow good things in your souls, so that you may find them in your life....

"You will take to wife the daughters of the Gentiles, purifying them (*katharizontes autas*).... Then the Lord shall raise up a new Priest..., and His star shall arise in heaven like that of a King [*cf.* Num. 24:17f].... He shall shine forth as the sun on the earth [*cf.* Malachi 3 & 4].... The knowledge of the Lord shall be poured forth upon the earth as the water of the seas.... The **Spirit** of understanding and sanctification shall rest upon Him in the water [compare Luke 3]....

"In His Priesthood, the Gentiles shall be multiplied in knowledge upon the earth and enlightened through the grace of the Lord. In His Priesthood, sin shall come to an end.... The Lord shall rejoice in His children, and be well pleased in His beloved ones for ever.... All the saints shall clothe themselves with joy."<sup>12</sup> Compare Galatians 3:27!

### **67. Proselyte baptism: the *Tannaim* (from B.C. 70 onward)**

Also the Judaistic *Tannaim* Shammai and Hillel discuss the above -- perhaps from 30 B.C. onward.<sup>13</sup> The *Tannaim* were those Israelitic authorities who expounded the Law of God for a period of about two centuries, starting with Hillel and Shammai (who were born around 70 B.C.). Their comments on Old Testament Scripture are called the *Tanna*.<sup>14</sup> The latter are a very valuable indication of how the Bible was interpreted after the close of the Old Testament (with the prophet Malachi), and before the beginning of the New Testament (from Matthew onward).

From the earliest of these intertestamental *Tanna*, such as those of Hillel and Shammai, the Israelitic understanding of Holy Writ right before the birth of Jesus can be seen quite clearly. In the *Tanna* on Genesis 6:9f, it is clear that these rabbinical commentators regarded Noah's whole family as already just[ified] -- prior to the later inception of circumcision. Indeed, also from the *Tanna* on Genesis 17:12-14, it is clear that those born in Abraham's household were regarded as already "bought" (and thus as already in the covenant) even before they received Circumcision -- some as early as eight days old. Compare too Genesis 12:5; 14:14; 15:2-6; 17:24-27.

It is for this reason that all their males were to be circumcised. Not circumcising those born in the household -- or those bought with money as household servants and thus added to the

homestead -- was indeed a grievous sin. Yet such was not the sin of refusing to enter into covenant. To the contrary, it was the sin of having "broken" the covenant already entered into and therefore thoroughly binding upon that household. Genesis 15:18; 17:10-14; Exodus 4:24-26; Joshua 5:6-11.

Now this obviously presupposes the existence of the covenant with God's people and their even infant children, prior to their circumcising (or their non-circumcising) of their own infant children of the covenant. The latter was to be done through the agency of a Minister of the Word and Sacraments. Genesis 17:23f *cf.* 20:7 & 21:4.

Explaining Genesis 17:12-14, the Pre-Christian Tannaic passages say:<sup>15</sup> "If anyone buys a pregnant Gentile slave[-woman], and she thereafter gives birth to a boy -- then that is a slave-child [that had formerly together with the mother already been] bought with money: to be circumcised on the eighth day [after birth]. But if anyone buys a Gentile slave[-woman] and her [already-born 'separate'] child with her -- that is a slave-child bought with money, to be circumcised at the very first" alias at the same time the mother is baptized.

#### **68. The bearing of these Tanna on First Corinthians 7:14 and on the Essenes**

Similarly, this very important principle of holiness-from-the-womb (rather than holiness-from-circumcision) -- is reflected also in First Corinthians 7:14. For it is from the act of sexual intercourse producing the pregnancy, and not from the much later infant baptism onward, that the covenant child is sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Clearly, all *ex opere operato* voodoo at baptism --is hereby excluded.

The same is clear from the Hebraic practice of the household baptism of proselyte families. The great Anglican baptismal scholar Rev. Dr. William Wall gives a good explanation of this, in his *History of Infant Baptism* ( I:19f): "Though the child...were begotten and conceived in the womb before the parents were baptized, yet if they (and particularly if the mother) were baptized before it were born into the world, the Jews had a saying...recorded by Maimonides [*Isa. Bia* 13] and also in the *Talmud* -- 'A heathen woman, if she is made a proselytess when big with child, that child need not baptism. For the baptism of the mother serves him for baptism.'"

This can only mean that both the parent and the unborn child were regarded as having been cleansed before the baptism of the parent. Consequently, it is not the baptism which cleanses either of them. For they were both already cleansed -- by grace alone and through faith alone -- before that baptism.

The adult proselytes' non-circumcising of their own male children in this way, constituted not just the former's but even the latter's breach of a covenant already there for them (and thus binding also upon them). "In the case of girls," however -- comments the great Lutheran scholar Jeremias<sup>16</sup> -- "baptism was the only act of admission. These [above-mentioned] passages indirectly prove for the Tannaitic period the baptism of Gentile girls at the earliest age...."

"If the birth occurred before the baptism of the mother, the infant was baptized along with the mother on her admission.... The oldest rabbinic sources take it completely for granted that

the children, even the smallest children, were admitted with their parents into the Jewish faith.... For the girls, the act of admission was baptism; for the boys, it was preceded by circumcision.... Colossians 2:11 adds confirmation of this point. Paul here names baptism 'the Christian circumcision.'"

About the first-century B.C. Essenes, and also about the similar 'Qumran' sects mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls, we can be brief. They were all: syncretistic (Judeo-Gnostic); hemerobaptistic (practising daily religious re-ablutions); autosoteric; and antipaedocovenantal. As such, they represent a paganizing departure from the Old Testament -- with no influence whatsoever upon either John the baptizer or New Testament Christianity.<sup>17</sup> The latter derived straight from Old Testament practices -- before their later devolution into degenerating Judaism.

### **69. John the baptizer on presacramental piety in covenant infants**

Just before and even during Christ's own earthly lifetime, the Scribes and Pharisees crossed land and sea to make proselytes.<sup>18</sup> Whenever they were successful, here is what happened to their converts and the latter's families.

First, the adult male converts were catechized. Then, their confession of sins and profession of faith were heard. Next, they and their males were circumcised. Subsequently, they and their wives were baptized -- in the presence of three human witnesses called *>elōhīym*.<sup>19</sup> Then their little children were baptized -- right after the parents.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, all the members of these converted families were then given new names.<sup>21</sup> For there was a general consensus in rabbinical Judaism that, at death, the people of Israel (but usually not unconverted Gentiles) go forth into a state of bliss at that 'age to come.'<sup>22</sup>

Enter John the baptizer! He urged his addressees to "repent" before he would baptize them. The Bible says he baptized "all the land of Judea" -- hence, not just adults but also their tiny children.<sup>23</sup> Significantly, Acts 22:16 and First Corinthians 6:11 & 7:14 all seem to connect New Testament Christian baptism -- *via* John the baptizer -- with the antecedent Judaic baptism of proselytes and their infant children.

The Early Church Father Tertullian called John "the boundary set between the Old Covenant and the New, at which Judaism ceased and Christianity began."<sup>24</sup> Again, Gregory Nazianzen called John the baptizer "the middle person between the Old and New Testaments."<sup>25</sup>

The famous modern antiquarian Rev. Professor Dr. Joachim Jeremias seems to draw the same conclusion. He does so, when discussing First Corinthians 7:14's famous statement that "your children...are holy" even from the time of their conception onward. Though himself a conservative Lutheran, Jeremias rightly gives the Calvinistic understanding of this passage.

This text, observes Jeremias,<sup>26</sup> is only intelligible when it is remembered that "Judaism distinguishes between children who were [both] begotten and born...[altogether] before conversion to Judaism -- and children who were begotten and born...[altogether] after conversion

to Judaism." Accordingly, concludes Jeremias, in First Corinthians 7:14 "the 'holiness' of the children rests not on baptism but on their descent from a Christian father or a Christian mother."<sup>27</sup>

## **70. Presacramental piety in covenant infants according to Philo**

The famous Alexandrian Judaist Philo, who died around 40 A.D. (and thus about a decade after John the baptizer), discussed<sup>28</sup> how even Eve conceived children. Philo stated that "Adam had sexual intercourse with his wife," so that "she conceived...and said: 'I have received a male baby by the instrumentality of God' [*cf.* Genesis 4:1-2]."

Explained Philo: "A man, in accordance with nature, comes together with a woman...to enter upon those embraces that [sometimes] lead to the generation of children.... Yet they alone will never of themselves bring forth offspring -- without receiving 'seed' from an Other."

More specifically considering 'godly seed' such as Abel and Seth, Philo then asked: "Who then is the One Who sows...the things that are good?" Philo himself then answered: "It is God, then, Who indeed sows the seed.... He bestows His Own offspring whom He has sown.... Moses...introduces Sarah as being 'with child' when God 'visited' her.... And in the case of Leah, Moses teaches that...God indeed opened her womb."

Philo observed<sup>29</sup> that Jewish babies are even "in their swaddling clothes" -- and therefore also before their circumcision -- "trained to recognize God as their Father.... Consequently, they are taught the knowledge [of the Law] from earliest youth [*cf.* Second Timothy 1:3-6 & 3:14-16]. They bear in their souls the image of the Commandments" -- even before their birth. *Cf.* Psalm 139:13-17 & Ecclesiastes 11:5.

Probably referring especially to Judaism's proselytes from the Gentiles, Philo added that "nearly all other persons are sprinkled with water." Yet he assumed that apostate or even backslidden Judaists too need (re-)cleansing. Thus, he specifically said that Moses told the priests -- after "dipping some branches of hyssop in the mixture of ashes and water --to sprinkle it over those who were to be purified."

## **71. The presacramental piety of covenanters according to Josephus**

About half a century after Philo and John the baptizer, the Judaistic Sadducee and famous historian Josephus wrote his various writings -- toward the end of the first century A.D. Interestingly, like Philo<sup>30</sup> and like the New Testament itself<sup>31</sup> -- Josephus<sup>32</sup> too uses the Greek word *panoikei* to refer to whole households.

Josephus further tells us that the Hebrew children "from their earliest consciousness...learned the Laws -- so as to have them...engraved upon the soul." They were "brought up in learning"; they were "exercised in the Laws"; and they were "made acquainted with the acts of their predecessors -- in order to imitate them."<sup>33</sup>

Josephus also tells us that "Aaron himself and his sons were **sprinkled** with water."<sup>34</sup> Indeed, in his own autobiographical *Life* and his *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus informs us:<sup>35</sup> "I am not only sprung from a sacerdotal family.... By my mother, I am of the royal blood.... I was born in the first year of the reign of Caius Caesar [37 A.D.].... Jesus, a wise man, was about this time.... He was Christ...."

"John that was called the baptizer...was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue both as to righteousness towards one another and piety towards God -- and so to come to baptism.... The washing would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it not in order to the putting away of some sins -- but for the purification of the body: supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness."

Very clearly, all this presupposes "piety" and "righteousness" and "virtue" in candidates -- before their Johannine baptism. For that "washing" by John -- explains Josephus -- was "not in order to the putting away of some sins." In judaical proselyte baptism -- as well as in Johannine baptism, Christic baptism, apostolic baptism and early-patristic baptism -- the baptismal candidate was therefore regarded as having been purified thoroughly beforehand.

## **72. The precircumcisional piety of covenant infants according to the Talmud**

The *Talmud* is a large body of Judaistic teachings first reduced to writing apparently only from the third century A.D. onward. The part known as the *Mishna*, dates from around 150-220 A.D. The lesser or *Jerusalem Talmud* was compiled in 230 A.D.

The *Gemara* (which is far the greatest part of the major or *Babylonian Talmud*) was not completed till about 540 A.D. The roots of the *Talmud* rests, however, upon generations of prior oral traditions -- going back at least to the time of Ezra (*circa* 450 B.C.).<sup>36</sup>

In the *Talmud*,<sup>37</sup> prenatal and thus precircumcisional teachability -- and therefore regeneratedness -- is presupposed. For even prenatal illumination is assumed -- when unborn children were then first "taught" their religious lore. Cf. Psalm 139:15f & Jeremiah 1:5 with Second Timothy 1:3-5 & 3:14-16.

Talmudically, a Hebrew male baby did not become a Hebrew by being circumcised. To the contrary, a Hebrew baby was circumcised as a baby -- precisely because he was already a Hebrew before his infant circumcision. Cf. Philippians 3:5 & Second Timothy 1:3-6. Indeed, uncircumcisable Hebrew female babies were fully Hebrewesses -- and later Israelitesses -- regardless of their lifelong uncircumcision. Genesis 34:1-31 & Num. 27:8f & 36:2f cf. Luke 13:16 & 23:28f.

According to the *Talmud*,<sup>38</sup> the babies of Gentile proselytes themselves became Jews -- before their infant circumcisions. For they became Jews as soon as their parents were adopted by Jewish families, or alternatively themselves professed the Jewish faith. Declares the *Talmud*, "whenever one becomes a proselyte, he is accounted as an infant newly born" --and hence as one not yet circumcised.<sup>39</sup>



Indeed, ancient Israelitic missionaries, continues the *Talmud*,<sup>40</sup> "baptized the little young proselyte" along with his parents. This refers to the practice of the Judaistic baptizings of the babies of proselytes -- both before and during the earthly lifetime of John the baptizer and of Jesus Christ Himself. First Kings 18:30-37 and Malachi 3:1f & 4:4-6 cf. Luke 1:13-17 and John 1:25-34f and Matthew 21:25 & 23:15.

### **73. The Talmud on the circumcision and baptism of proselytes**

The *Babylonian Talmud* declares:<sup>41</sup> "When a proselyte is received, he must be circumcised.... Then, when he is cured [of the wound of circumcision] -- they baptize him in the presence of two wise men."

The *Jerusalem Talmud* adds<sup>42</sup> that when "one finds an infant cast out, and baptizes him in the name of a servant -- do thou also circumcise him!" Also the Babylonian *Gemara*: "The proselytes entered not into covenant but by circumcision, baptism, and sprinkling of blood."

In Judaism's *Talmud*, the above-mentioned pre-circumcisional justification also implies even a prenatal illumination of the baby. For he or she has not only a latent potential, but also an actual prenatal capacity. Even before birth,<sup>43</sup> a child is therefore "taught" religious lore.

This principle clearly extends not only to the infants of slaves, in covenant homes, but also to foundlings -- as well as to an enemy's infants spared in warfare. For Genesis 17:9-27 provides for the circumcision not only of the infants of domestic slaves, but also of all infants adopted into the covenant household. Indeed, Deuteronomy 20:13f and 21:10f seem to imply that at least the nails of women and children captured in war should be circumcised.

Thus, in the Jerusalem *Jevamoth* (8:4), Rabbi Hezekiah comments: "Behold, one finds an infant cast out, and baptizes him in the name of a servant -- do thou also circumcise him in the name of a servant! But if he baptize him in the name of a freeman -- do thou also circumcise him in the name of a freeman!"

Similarly, the Gentile babies of proselytes -- themselves became Jews before their own circumcision. Some of them 'judaized' at the very moment they were adopted into Jewish families. Others became Jews precisely when their own parents themselves accepted Judaistic proselyte baptism -- before the circumcising of those babies themselves soon thereafter.<sup>44</sup>

The Judaistic *Talmud* declares that "whenever one becomes a proselyte, he is accounted an infant newly born."<sup>45</sup> For in Old Testament times, missionaries spreading the Hebrew religion "baptized the little young proselyte" -- along with his ex-heathen 'israeliticized' parents.<sup>46</sup>

### **74. Comments in the Mishna and the Gemara on infant proselyte baptism**

The *Mishna* is a system of ancient oral traditions and customs of the Jews, written down within two centuries of the inauguration of Johannine and Christic baptism. The *Mishnah*

*Chethuboth* both in the Babylonian and in the Jerusalem *Talmud*, mention children becoming proselytes.

Says the Jerusalem *Mishna*: "If a girl born of heathen parents be made a proselyte after she be three years and a day old, then she is not to have such and such privileges there mentioned." And the Babylonian *Mishna* says: "If she be made a proselyte before that age, she shall have the said privileges."

The above reference to a tiny "girl" obviously applies also to an infant boy. However, the latter little proselyte was, in addition to being baptized, also circumcised.

Thus the later *Gemara* adds: "If with a proselyte his sons and daughters be made proselytes, that which is done by their father redounds to their good.... They are wont to baptize such a proselyte in infancy.... This is for his good."<sup>47</sup> For "if any one become a proselyte, he is like a child 'new born.'"<sup>48</sup>

## **75. Patristic comments on pre-Christian 'Judaic' baptism**

According to the 200 A.D. Tertullian, the Pre-Christian Pagans for their own ablutions sometimes stole the rite of baptism from the ancient Israelites. "Here we see," observes Tertullian,<sup>49</sup> "the aim of the devil -- to ape the things of God. Since he [the devil] also sets up a 'baptism' for his disciples."

Fifty years later, Cyprian added:<sup>50</sup> "The Jews had already, and a long time ago, the baptism of the Law of Moses." However, by Christians they "are now to be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ."

A century later, Basil the Great gave his great *Oration on Baptism*. There he compared the baptisms of Moses, of John, and of Christ.

Finally, Basil's contemporary Gregory Nazianzen declared<sup>51</sup> that "Moses gave a baptism.... They were baptized in the cloud and in the sea.... These were but a type of ours -- as Paul understands it." Exodus chapters 14 to 19; Psalms 77:15-20; 78:12-16; First Corinthians 10:1-2.

## **76. Mediaeval Jewish commentators on Old Testament and Talmudic baptisms**

Also mediaeval Jewish commentators throw similar light onto ancient proselyte baptisms. Thus, Rabbi Solomon explains: "Our rabbis teach that our fathers entered into covenant by circumcision and baptism and sprinkling of blood." And Rabbi Joseph: "Little children are made proselytes together with their fathers."

Moses Maimonides declares:<sup>52</sup> "By three things did Israel enter into covenant -- by circumcision; and baptism; and sacrifice. Circumcision was in Egypt -- as it is written [of the Passover] 'No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof [Exodus 12:48]. Baptism was in the wilderness, just before the giving of the Law -- as it is written [Exodus 19:10] 'sanctify them...and

let them wash'.... And sacrifice -- as it is said [Exodus 24:5] 'And he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings' *etc.*"

Further: "When an 'ethnic' [alias a Gentile] is willing to enter into the covenant..., he must be circumcised and baptized and bring a sacrifice; or, if it be a woman, be baptized.... A proselyte that is under age, they are wont to baptize....

"As it is written, 'As you are, so shall the stranger be!'" Numbers 15:15 *cf.* Exodus 12:43-49. As 'you are.' And "How are you? By circumcision and baptism!"

Consequently, "a stranger that is circumcised and not baptized, or baptized and not circumcised -- he is not a proselyte till he be both circumcised and baptized.... Even as they circumcise and baptize strangers, so do they circumcise and baptize servants that are received from Heathens into servitude....

"There were many Proselytes that in David's and Solomon's time joined themselves [to Israel].... The judges of the Great Synagogue had a care of them. They drove them not away after they were baptized.... They baptized not a Proselyte on the sabbath.... As soon as he grows whole of the wound of circumcision, they bring him to baptism.... The Gentile that is made a proselyte and the slave that is made free -- behold, he is like a 'new born' child!"

Further, as regards the Hebrew adoption of Gentile children and the latter's proselyte baptism:<sup>53</sup> "An Israelite that takes a little heathen child, or that finds an heathen infant, baptizes him for a proselyte." Compare Genesis 17:13-27 & 14:14 & 18:19.

The apostle Paul had remarked under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit<sup>54</sup> that the Israelites at the exodus were all "baptized into Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." So too were their accompanying proselytes, including those of mixed blood who then left Egypt with them.<sup>55</sup>

## **77. Selden and Modena on Talmudic proselyte baptisms of judaized families**

The great Westminster Assembly Hebraist Dr. John Selden makes an important declaration about a statement of Rabbi Paul. The latter stated in First Corinthians 10:1-2 that 'our fathers were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.'

This statement, explains Selden,<sup>56</sup> would have been almost unintelligible to Paul's addressees -- had it then not been well-known that the Jews regarded their ancestors as having entered into the Mosaic covenant precisely by baptism. This fact is reinforced further by Moses' own act soon thereafter -- when he "took the blood and sprinkled it on the people." For that act too, the New Testament<sup>57</sup> calls -- a 'baptism.'

Selden elaborates further, concerning the way the Jews proselytized during Talmudic and even Post-Talmudic times. Held the Judaistic *Gemara* of the ancient Hebrews: "They are wont to baptize such a proselyte in infancy, upon the 'profession of the House of Judgment'" alias the Hebrew Court. "For this is for 'his good.'"

Here Selden explains: "A child of never so little age might by their custom be made a proselyte.... A proselyte, if of age, made profession to the Court that he would keep Moses' Law. But in the case of minors, the Court itself did profess in their name the same thing."

Further: "Any male child of such a proselyte that was under the age of thirteen years and a day -- and females that were under twelve years and a day -- they baptized as infants, at the request and by the assent of the father or the authority of the Court.... If they were above that age, they consented for themselves."<sup>58</sup>

In his 1650 *History of the Rites...of the Present Jews*, Leo Modena adds of the proselyte to Judaism: "They take and circumcise him.... As soon as he is well of his sore, he is to wash himself all over in water.... From henceforth, he becomes as a natural Jew."

## **78. Witsius and Wall on Jewish proselyte baptisms**

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, the great Calvinist theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Witsius explains<sup>59</sup> that the Judaists themselves "make the first practice of this baptism to be very ancient. Some ascribe it to the patriarch Jacob -- when he received into his family as a domestic church, the Shechemite young women [and 'little ones'] and other Gentiles who resided with him. Because...Jacob said to his household and to all that were with him, 'Put away the strange gods that are among you --and be clean!'"<sup>60</sup>

As regards the latter-mentioned Biblical passage, continues Witsius,<sup>61</sup> the great Judaistic scholar "Aben Ezra explains the words 'be clean' by the washing of the body.... Others derive the...practice of this baptism from what is said to Moses: 'Go unto the people and sanctify them...and let them wash their clothes!'"<sup>62</sup> -- before the people were given the Ten Commandments."<sup>63</sup>

Thus far, we must therefore agree with the statement of the learned Dr Wall<sup>64</sup> that "this gives great light for the better understanding [of] the meaning of our Saviour, when [in Matthew 28:19] He bids His apostles: 'Go and disciple all the nations, and baptize them!' For when a commission is given in such short words, and there is no express direction what they shall do with the infants of those who become proselytes -- the natural and obvious interpretation is that they must do in that matter as they and the Church in which they lived always used to do.

"As now at this time, if an island or country of heathen be discovered, and a Minister be sent out to them by the Bishops of the Church of England who should say 'Go and convert such a nation and baptize them' -- he would know without asking any question that he must baptize [also] the infants of those who, [after] being converted, offered them to baptism. Because he knows that to be the meaning and the custom of that Church or Bishop by which he is sent."

The famous modern antiquarian Rev. Professor Dr. Joachim Jeremias writes as a confessionalistic and consubstantiationistic Lutheran. Yet (as already noted), he offers the Calvinistic explanation of First Corinthians 7:14. Indeed, he rightly insists regarding prechristian proselyte baptism: "Judaism distinguishes between [baptizable] children who are begotten and born...before conversion to Judaism, and children who were begotten and born...after conversion

to Judaism [without baptism].... We conclude that the 'holiness' of the children [referred to in First Corinthians 7:14] rests not on baptism -- but on their descent from a Christian father or a Christian mother."<sup>65</sup> Compare too Second Timothy 1:6 & 3:14-16.

### **79. Evidence in Paganism of child 'faith' and of 'baptism' by sprinkling**

At this point, we might consider also the evidences for Christian infant baptism by sprinkling -- yielded even by some of the corrupt practices of Pre-Christian heathen religions. They were themselves originally derived from Noah and/or from the Old Testament and/or from Intertestamental Judaism -- before degenerating into perversions thereof.

The Noachic 'baptism' by pouring rain,<sup>66</sup> seems to be dimly echoed both in the later (yet still 'Pre-Exodus') Ancient Egyptian practice of pouring water over bathers. It is also reflected in the yet-later 'baptism' of God's people and their babes-in-arms from rainclouds at the Red Sea, when they all left Egypt -- before later receiving yet other Mosaic 'baptisms' or purificatory sprinklings.<sup>67</sup>

Infant dedication --even to pagan idols -- long continued. It was found especially among the Heathen in the Near East.<sup>68</sup>

Greek Paganism, however, was all Post-Mosaic. Indeed, many of the heathen sprinklings and pseudobaptisms of the Ancient Greeks -- may well have been derived at least in part from post-captivity Jewish synagogues in the various Pre-Christian dispersions or *diasporas*.<sup>69</sup> Such Ancient-Pagan Greek practices included: Homer's sprinklings and pourings; Herodotus's sprinkling-vases; Euripides's spring-water vessels and sprinkling from streams with 'dewy water' and lustral sprinkling-waters and sea-dews; and Plato's lustrations and sprinklings.

Passow's great German *Dictionary of the Greek Language* (from which the first edition of Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* was mainly translated), gives one of the meanings of *baptizō* in Pagan Classical Greek as "'to pour over' (Plato)." Other meanings include: 'pouring' (Aristophon); 'shower upon' (Plato); 'sprinkle' (Menander); 'superfuse' (Athenaeus); 'overload' (Diodorus Siculus); 'inundate' (Heliodorus); 'overwhelm' (Josephus); 'come upon' (Philo); and 'bestorm' (Plutarch).<sup>70</sup>

Just before the time of Christ, among the Pagan Romans we encounter: Virgil's *hydranos* priest, who "sprinkled them with the light spray for their purification"; Aeneas, who himself "sprinkles his body with fresh water"; and the nymph-goddess Cyrene's triple sprinklings. Indeed, Virgil's *Aeneid*<sup>71</sup> even describes the custom of washing infants -- very soon after their birth.

Virgil's contemporary, Ovid, similarly wrote: "thrice she sprinkled her head"; "bedew yourself with living water"; "I sprinkled myself with the spray of the sea"; and "the bedewing waters." Ovid also wrote: "he himself washed me by sprinkling me with the most pure water"; "sprinkle the village"; "let the water first sprinkle them"; "touch the body with...the sprinkled water"; "sprinkled upon your horns"; and "sprinkled with a stream of wine."<sup>72</sup>

Around 100 A.D., the Pagan Plutarch spoke of affusions of sea-water. Such were thrice sprinkled, by a heathen priest.

Indeed, around 125 -- Apuleius described giving himself "a wash with sea-water for the purpose of purification" under the rites of Isis. Declared Apuleius: "Mithras himself washed me, sprinkling over me the purest water."<sup>73</sup>

## **80. Patristic explanation of Pre- and Post-Christian pagan sprinklings**

The Early Church Fathers give the correct explanation of these Pre-Christian (and sometimes even Post-Christian) pagan 'sprinklings.' The 150 A.D. patristic writer Justin Martyr calls each of these heathen 'mysteries' an "imitation" -- based upon "what was said by Moses."<sup>74</sup>

A little later, there were apostates from Christianity such as various gnostic heretics who stole baptism from the Church and then perverted it. Wrote Irenaeus around A.D. 185: "There are as many schemes of redemption as there are teachers of these 'mystical' opinions.... This class of men has been instigated by Satan to a denial of that baptism which is...the whole faith.... Others again lead them to a place where water is, and 'baptize' them.... Mixing oil and water together, they place this mixture upon the heads of those initiated."<sup>75</sup>

Clearly, then, these rites of apostates (like the Valentinians) evidence the mode of sprinkling as that being practised by the Early Church -- from which the apostates had fallen away. But by admixing oil with water in their own initiation rites, these apostates also anticipated semipelagianizing mediaeval Romanism itself.

The 195 A.D. Clement of Alexandria described a similar teaching. Declared Clement: "Lustrations hold the first place in the 'Mysteries' obtaining among the Greeks -- as also the washings among the Barbarians."<sup>76</sup>

Also the A.D. 200f Tertullian, in his work *On Baptism*, referred<sup>77</sup> to the pagan "washings" of "Isis or Mithras." There devotees to those cults, "by carrying water around and sprinkling it..., expiate...whole cities." Thus, where we find "at the Apollinarian and Eleusinian Games [that] they are 'baptized'" -- explained Tertullian of these pagan washings -- it is actually "the devil imitating the things of God wherever we find him too practising 'baptisms' on his own!"

Indeed, in Tertullian's *Prescriptions Against Heretics*, he again said<sup>78</sup> that "the devil...too 'baptizes' some" -- where "Mithras there sets his mark on the foreheads of his soldiers. Cf. Revelation 7:2-4f; 13:16; 14:1; & 22:4f. "Is it not clear to us," asks Tertullian, "that the devil imitated...the Jewish Law?" The 250 A.D. Cyprian, in turn, even refers to an unbiblical 'Paedocommunion' among the Pagans and/or the Neo-paganizers!<sup>79</sup>

Even as late as A.D. 364, according to the Ancient Church Historian Theodoret,<sup>80</sup> "the insensate emperor" Valentinian approached the pagan temple of 'Fortune.' There "the temple-keepers had taken their stand on each side of the door -- purifying with sprinklers, as they imagined, those who entered."

Indeed, also the 375 A.D. Gregory of Nazianzen insisted<sup>81</sup> that in the pagan 'Mysteries,' the initiatory rites of "sprinklings" had been stolen by demons. They had been filched, he added, from "the legal purifications" of the Ancient Hebrews.

### **81. Jewish and pagan impressions of Early Christian baptisms**

The anonymous author of the Ancient Jewish *Nizzachon* unbiblically denies the transmission to all babies of Adam's original sin. There, he first discusses Judaic proselyte baptism.

That, he suggests, occurred not by submersion. For he insists that in the Old Testament, "it is nowhere commanded to plunge persons or proselytes into the water."

Then, looking at New Testament baptism, he asked Christians:<sup>82</sup> "From what sin or uncleanness does this baptism purify? What sin or uncleanness is there in infant children -- that ye baptize **them**?"

Clearly, this Judaistic *Nizzachon* thus recognized that the Early Christians -- just like the Judaists -- baptized babies. It also recognized that the Early Christians, unlike the Judaists, believed infants inherit original sin.

To this must be added the following statement of Rabbi Isaac, directed against Christians. "They have abrogated circumcision, and substituted baptism in its stead.... They have done likewise with the sabbath -- instead of which they observe the first day of the week."<sup>83</sup>

This must mean that the Early Christians whom Rabbi Isaac here criticizes, were themselves baptizing also infants -- just as the Hebrews too had circumcised infants. It must also mean that the Early Christians were then observing Sunday as the Sabbath -- just as the Hebrews had observed their sabbath (but on Saturday).

Certainly the Pagans often dedicated their own infants to idols -- and sometimes as slaughtered sacrifices, by way of infanticide. Probably this is why they themselves sometimes concluded that the Christians' dedication of their own infants to the Triune God by way of baptism -- involved their 'infanticide' too.

Thus, the 130 A.D. Christian *Epistle to Diognetus* is highly significant. For it assured him that Christians "beget children but...do not destroy their offspring" in the way many Pagans then did theirs.<sup>84</sup>

The 145f A.D. Christian apologist Justin added in his *First Apology to [the pagan Roman Emperor] Antoninus Pius*:<sup>85</sup> "As for us, we have been taught that to expose newly-born children is the part of wicked men.... We see that almost all so exposed -- not only the girls, but also the males -- are brought up [by Pagans] to prostitution....

"We see you rear children only for this shameful use.... You receive the hire of these, and duty and taxes -- from them whom you ought to exterminate from your realm.... There are some who prostitute even their own children and wives, and some are openly mutilated for the purpose

of sodomy -- and they 'dedicate' those to the 'mother of the gods' [viz. to the pagan mother-goddess Cybele]."

Yet we **Christians** fear to expose our children, continued Justin, "lest some of them be not picked up but die -- and we become murderers.... We marry...[so] that we may bring up [our children].... Circumcision began with Abraham...in Christ the Son of God.... We who have approached God through Him, have received not carnal but spiritual circumcision.... And we have received it through baptism. Since we were sinners..., and all mankind may equally obtain it" (including also our own infants).

## **82. The difference between the infant initiation rites of Pagans and Christians**

The Christian Apologist Athenagoras implicitly explained the true nature of the sacraments of adult communion and infant baptism. For he stated in his (177 A.D.) *Plea for the Christians*<sup>86</sup> to the pagan Roman Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Commodus that if Christians were indeed [to be] guilty of the charges of cannibalism and incest, as their pagan opponents falsely alleged them to be, then -- "destroy us root and branch, [together] with our wives and children!"

However, "having the hope of eternal life, we despise...even the 'pleasures' of the soul. Each of us reckons her his own wife, whom he has married according to the laws laid down...for the purpose of having children.... Such is our character."

But "those [Pagans] who have set up a market for fornication and established infamous resorts...for every kind of vile pleasure..., do not abstain even from males. Males with males commit shocking abominations, outraging all the noblest and comeliest bodies in all sorts of ways -- [and] so dishonouring the fair workmanship of God (for beauty on earth is...by the hand and will of God). These men, I say, revile us for the very things which they are conscious of themselves.... Who of them can accuse us of murder?!"

Indeed, "when we say that those women who use drugs to bring on abortion, commit murder -- and will have to give an account to God for the abortion -- on what principles should we commit murder? For it does not belong to the same person to regard the very foetus in the womb as a created being and therefore an object of God's care -- and, when it has passed into life, to kill it. And [we do] not...expose an infant.... Those who expose them, are chargeable with child-murder!"

Then there is also the Christian apologist Minucius Felix. He implied<sup>87</sup> (around 210 A.D.) that Christian initiation within the established Church is by way of infant baptism -- and not, as the Pagans falsely alleged [obtained among Christians], by way of the slaughter of an infant.

Explains Minucius to the 'blind' heathen 'Caecilius': "The story [among the Pagans] about the initiation of young novices [by us], is as much to be detested as it is well-known. An infant...is [allegedly] slain by the young pupil who has been urged on.... No one [even among the Pagans] can believe this --except one who can [himself] dare to do it! And I see that you [Pagans] at one time [really do] expose your begotten children to wild beasts and to birds; at another, that you crush them....



"There are some [pagan] women who, by drinking medical preparations, extinguish the source of the future of man in their very bowels.... These things assuredly come down from the teaching of your gods! For Saturn did not [just] expose his children, but devoured them.

"With 'reason' [*sic*] were infants sacrificed to him by [pagan] parents" -- through infanticide. But Christians devote their babies as living sacrifices to Jehovah -- by infant baptism!

Even the Roman Emperor Julian 'the Apostate' affirmed that the Christians indeed baptized infants. It is true Julian wrongly alleged that Chrysostom alias "John Bishop of Constantinople denies that there is any sin in infants." Yet Julian rightly added that Chrysostom (in his *Homily on Baptized Persons*) indeed said: "We baptize infants also!"<sup>88</sup>

### **83. The transition from the New Testament to the Early Church Fathers**

After Christ's final bloodshedding on Calvary, the bloody sign of Old Testament household circumcision was replaced by the unbloody sign of New Testament household baptism. Genesis 17:10-27; Exodus 4:24-26; Romans 4:11 to 6:3f; Colossians 2:11-13. Only much later, from about 250 A.D. onward, did Christian baptism begin to degenerate -- through contact with devolved Judaistic proselyte baptism on the one hand and pagan mystery rites *ex opere operato* on the other.

With the closing of the New Testament in the first century A.D., God's infallible revelation to man in the Holy Bible was completed. Thereafter, we have only the fallible testimony of Church History. In general, however, the earlier that latter testimony -- the more accurate and valuable the account concerned.

According to Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield in his 1897 work *The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation*,<sup>89</sup> "the first Christians had no difficulty in understanding and confessing that Christ had come into a world lost in sin to establish a kingdom of righteousness.... That infants were admitted into this citizenship, they did not question."

Let us then now consider the Post-Biblical and Early-Patristic evidence anent the covenantal status of the children of Christians. We start off with two documents from the first century of the Christian era -- the *Epistle of Clement* and the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*.

### **84. Clement of Rome: 'messengers' unblameable from their youth onward**

First Clement was written (between 68 and 97 A.D.) by the apostle Paul's friend<sup>90</sup> Clement, the later Church Overseer of Rome. It reminded its Corinthian Christian addressees that Noah in his ministry had preached "regeneration." Indeed, "the Lord saved by him" all that "entered into the ark" -- at the time of the great flood.<sup>91</sup>

Later, Clement added that neither the faithful Job and David nor their families were free from pollution -- from their nativity onward. Declared Clement: "Of Job it is written that he was

just and blameless.... Yet he condemns himself, and says: 'There is none free from pollution! No, not though his life be but of the length of one day!' Thus: "*oude ei mias hēmeras hē zōē autou!*"

Similarly, Clement also referred to David's Psalm 51:5. He then added: "Let us consider...whereof we were made; who and what kind of persons we came into this world.... He Who made and formed us, brought us into His own world -- having prepared for us His \*benefits\* before we were born." Thus: *proetoimasas tas euergesias Autou prin hēmas genēthēnai.*"

Indeed, God safely preserved even the converted prostitute Rahab -- "and the household" of her father. For, Clement explained, "redemption should flow through the blood of the Lord -- to all them that believe."<sup>92</sup>

Now this "redemption" of "all" in the "household" apparently commences at the womb. For, explained Clement,<sup>93</sup> "Scripture says in a certain place, 'The Spirit of the Lord is a candle -- searching the secret parts of the belly.'<sup>94</sup> Consequently, "let us train up the young men in the fear of God" -- not wrongly trying to bring them into it, as if they were ever outside of it.

"Let your children keep on being partakers of true Christian training..., and keep on walking in it<sup>95</sup> with a pure mind! For He is a Searcher of the thoughts.... His breath [*cf.* the Holy Spirit] is in us" -- namely within Christians both infant and adult.

Challengingly, Clement later asked: "Let us consider, brethren, whereof we were made.... He Who made and formed us, brought us into His Own world -- having prepared for us His benefits before we were born."

Thus, many of the Roman and of the Corinthian Christians were also in Clement's day apparently acknowledged to have been rendered holy. That was their status from their conceptions and births onward, and thus even before their infant baptisms.<sup>96</sup>

Indeed, those who delivered Clement of Rome's Epistle and handed it over to the Corinthians -- had been Christians almost lifelong. For they were themselves said by Clement<sup>97</sup> to "have walked among us [Roman Christians] from youth [alias from their earliest days] to old age unblameably."

Many years earlier, Christ had baptized His Church with His Holy Ghost on the New Testament Day of Pentecost. It was then that "the Spirit of grace was poured out" upon both adult Christians and their children -- apparently including even visiting "strangers of Rome."<sup>98</sup>

In fact, it was precisely from Rome that Clement, decades later, sent his *First Epistle* to Corinth. He did so, using Christian messengers he declared had walked unblameably even from their childhood onward.

## **85. The *Didachē*: do not abort, but do baptize!**

Around 100 A.D., the *Didachē* -- alias the *Teaching of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles* -- catechetically discussed the 'two ways.' Those are the way of life, and the way of death -- as reflected by the keeping of breaking of the Ten Commandments.

Positively, as regards the way of life, the Decalogue requires man to be fruitful and multiply.<sup>99</sup> Negatively, as regards the way of death, the *Didachē* insists that man "shall not murder a child by abortion -- nor kill that which had been begotten." For "murderers of children are destroyers of the handiwork of God."<sup>100</sup>

Now the 'way of life' specifically requires baptism too. Continued the *Didachē*:<sup>101</sup> "Having first said all these things -- you must baptize...**unto** the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **with** living water."<sup>102</sup> This means: at a running spring<sup>103</sup> -- and **not** under the water. "But if you do not have 'living water' -- baptize at other water."<sup>104</sup> At all events: Pour out water thrice upon the head<sup>105</sup> -- **unto** the Name<sup>106</sup> of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit!"

Robert Ayres rightly explains all this, in his book *Christian Baptism: A Treatise on the Mode of Administering the Ordinance by the Apostles and Their Successors in the Early Ages of the Church*. There, Ayres notes<sup>107</sup> that the *Didachē* alias "'The Teaching of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles'...recognizes the sufficiency of baptism by affusion only.... No other mode is mentioned."

Hence the *Didachē* forbids human abortions, and encourages human reproduction. It also prescribes baptism: unto the Name of the Triune God; with living water; and by way of a triple outpouring upon the head.

## **86. The *Epistle of Barnabas*: be fruitful -- and promote baptism!**

The early-patristic *Epistle of Barnabas*, written perhaps around 102 A.D., endorses the above teaching. For God made Adam to be fruitful and to multiply and to subjugate the earth."<sup>108</sup> Indeed, explained Barnabas,<sup>109</sup> the Triune God has "renewed us [Christians] by the remission of our sins...so that we should possess the souls of children." Just as "the infant is kept alive first by honey, and then by milk -- so we also, being quickened and kept alive by the faith of the promise and by the Word, shall live, ruling over the earth."

Now the red heifer, Barnabas has reminded us, was "a type" of "Jesus" -- and of Christian baptism which points to Him. For the Old Testament Ministers were to take the heifer's ashes and to "sprinkle the people, one by one." In this, they were like those who sprinkled "through the cleansing efficiency of hyssop."

In New Testament times, they who still "sprinkle, are those that have proclaimed to us the remission of sins and purification of heart." That they do, when they "preach the Gospel" -- as the representatives of "the twelve tribes of Israel."<sup>110</sup>

Very obviously, representing tribes clearly includes even their infants. Indeed, as the next three chapters (mentioned below) go on to suggest -- this is also intimately connected to circumcision as well as to baptism.

Thus circumcision too had a deeply spiritual meaning. For God, continued Barnabas,<sup>111</sup> declares that "circumcision was not of the flesh but of the heart." For "Abraham, the first who enjoined circumcision, was looking forward in spirit to Jesus."

Moreover, Barnabas went on,<sup>112</sup> the foreshadowing of "the water" in respect of "baptism" had "reference to the Israelites." Here, the latter word means the Christ-repudiating Judaists.

This is seen in "the Living Fountain" (or "the Spring of Life") Whom they forsook. However, Christians who "trust in the cross, have gone down to[ward] the water" -- toward "the vessel of His Spirit." Then, having gone down "to[ward] the water"<sup>113</sup> -- though still "full of sin and defilement" -- Christians again "come up" away from it, "bearing fruit" in their "heart" and thus manifesting "trust in Jesus."

It should be noted here that God's people go "to" or toward the water -- not 'under' it. It should further be noted that they do not have their sins washed off by the water itself -- but by God and from "the vessel of His Spirit." Indeed, it should in addition be noted that they come away from the water "bearing fruit" in their "heart" -- and not upon their 'cleansed' bodies. Consequently, all baptismal regenerationism is quite excluded.

Barnabas concluded that Christians are very much like the blessed Jacob -- after he was conceived, but before he was born.<sup>114</sup> For the Lord gave Christians the Testament which the Jews centuries after Jacob had gone and broken.<sup>115</sup>

Consequently, God now enjoins Christians too: "You shall not slay the child by procuring abortion! Nor, again, shall you destroy it after it has been born!"

"You shall not withdraw your hand from your son or from your daughter! But from their infancy you shall teach them the fear of the Lord!"<sup>116</sup> For the "murderers of children" alias the "destroyers of the workmanship of God" are on "the way of darkness" -- which must be avoided by "the children of love."<sup>117</sup>

## **87. Ignatius and Pliny: also the children of Christians belong to the Church**

We have seen that apostolic baptism was by pouring and sprinkling -- not by dipping or submersion. Thus Clement, the *Didachē* and Barnabas. In the context of the preceding chapters already dealt with above,<sup>118</sup> this further implies the sprinkling of covenant infants too.

Around 107 A.D., we find Ignatius Church Overseer of Antioch declaring that "Christ...was baptized by John -- in order that all righteousness might be fulfilled by Him." According to Ignatius, it was the task of the Minister of the Word and Sacraments to baptize believing households. Thus, he also sent "greetings to the houses of my brothers with their wives and children."<sup>119</sup>

Ignatius further greeted "the widow of Epitropos, with all the members of her [own] and her children's household."<sup>120</sup> These salutations certainly include the children and grandchildren of believers as members of the congregations.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, Ignatius also urged both young and old: "Let your baptism be to you as armour!"<sup>122</sup>

In about 111 A.D., even the pagan Pliny gave valuable information about Early Christianity. That Roman Governor of Bythia was discussing how Christians might be punished for their beliefs. Indeed, he wrote<sup>123</sup> to Emperor Trajan that he was not "at all sure whether any distinction should be made between them on the grounds of age -- or if young people (*teneri*) and adults (*robustiores*) should be treated alike."

Here it can quite clearly be seen that not just adults but also their very young children (*teneri*) belonged to the Christian Church in Bythia around 111 A.D. Indeed, even the classical scholars Stander and Louw -- themselves unsympathetic to apostolic Paedobaptism -- concede that the word "*teneri* in Latin generally refers to young children."<sup>124</sup>

### **88. Aristides: believers thank God for saving their own and their servants' babies**

Perhaps around 120 A.D., the Christian Apologist Aristides wrote to the Pagan Emperor Hadrian. There, Aristides implied that babies born to believers (*cf.* Genesis 17:7-10f) -- as well as the children of Christian masters' converted servants themselves (*cf.* Genesis 17:12) -- were all baptized. Indeed, Aristides clearly indicated that God is to be thanked exceedingly -- upon the infant deaths of covenant children of believing parents themselves, as well as upon the infant deaths of the children of household servants of Christians. For the latter believed their dying babies then went straight to glory.

Thus Aristides observed<sup>125</sup> that Christian masters, "on account of the love which they have for them, instruct the[ir] manservants and maidservants or the children [thereof] when any of them have such -- in order that they may [all] become Christians. And when they [the servants and their children] have become Christians, they [the masters] call them 'brethren' --without distinction."

Thereafter, the status of the converted servants and their children within the household of their masters -- is identical to the status of the Christian masters and mistresses and their own children. Explained Aristides: "When a child has been born to one of them, they thank God. And if he dies in infancy, they thank Him exceedingly -- because he departed this life without sins."

While Pagans, prone to procuring abortions, often cursed their idols when pregnancies occurred -- anti-abortive Christians thanked God for pregnancies. Indeed, even if their own children died in infancy, Christians still thanked God exceedingly. For they knew those children then died only after being cleansed from their sins (whether inherited or personal or both).

Aristides's phrase "departed this life without sins" is probably describing the pre-baptismal condition of those dying infants. For he also used a similar expression to describe the pre-baptismal condition of penitent adults.<sup>126</sup> Yet even if the expression is here describing the

post-baptismal status of early-dying infants of believers, it still clearly evidences that those infants' sins were forgiven -- before they died in their infancy.

Aristides also made another very significant statement about those early Christians. He declared: "If any righteous person of their number passes away from the world, they rejoice and give thanks to God and follow His body (*viz.* Christ's) -- "moving from one place [earth] to another [heaven]."

Taken all together, the above statements of Aristides mean that the infants even of Christians still inherit Adam's sin and therefore need cleansing with the blood of Jesus. Yet the statements also mean that after an early death, the infants of Christians thankfully go straight to heaven itself.

### **89. Diognetus, Papias & the Codex Bezae: Christians bear guileless children**

Around 130 A.D., the anonymous Christian author<sup>127</sup> of the *Epistle to Diognetus* insisted that "the Christians...bear children." Indeed, he even added that they "do not destroy their offspring" nor "cast away their fetuses"<sup>128</sup> -- as the ancient pagans did, and as sophisticated modern Pagans still do.

The extant fragments of the approximately 134 A.D. Papias, are indeed few in number. Yet one of them does record that the early Christians called those who practised a godly guilelessness -- "children."<sup>129</sup>

Indeed, the *Codex Beza* version of Acts 2:38f -- which version the famous antiquary Rev. Prof. Dr. Joachim Jeremias dates at "before 150" A.D.<sup>130</sup> -- clearly applies baptism even to the children of Christians. For it states: "Repent and be baptized.... For the promise is to us and to our children!"

### **90. The Shepherd of Hermas: the justified bride and her children**

Probably also before 150 A.D., the important Christian writing known as the *Shepherd of Hermas* referred<sup>131</sup> not only to "those who have indeed believed...and wish to be baptized in the Name of the Lord." In addition, it refers also to those that "are as unweaned children" (*brephē* or *infantes*) -- and who "remained like children, all the days of their life, in the same mind.... For infants are honourable before the Lord, and are the first persons with Him."<sup>132</sup>

Thus, "*infantes honorati sunt apud Dominum, et primi habentur.*" So too are all who "are as innocent as children" or infants.<sup>133</sup>

Even those adults who are to be "baptized," need to have their riches "circumcised."<sup>134</sup> Indeed, Hermas even enjoined adult converts: "Be simple and guileless, and you will be like speech-less little in-fants (*nēpia*) who do not know that wickedness which ruins the life of men."<sup>135</sup>

Now the "water" of baptism is God's "seal" of repentance. It is specifically to the "apostles and teachers" that "the seal of preaching" was given. Indeed, they were and are to 'preach baptism' -- and then, thereafter, also to give baptism to their converts.

At that time, the latter "descended with them toward the water -- and again ascended"<sup>136</sup> after the baptism. Yet note that the "apostles and teachers" here descended "with" the converts "toward the water" -- so that neither the baptizers nor those baptized were then under the water!

Note further that those thus being baptized, were to be as "innocent as children" -- viz. not impeccable, yet forgiven. Indeed, "infants are honourable before the Lord, and are the first persons with Him."

Hermas further spoke<sup>137</sup> about the righteous, and apparently also of their (justified) offspring, as being fruitful branches and burgeoning offshoots of a large fruit-tree -- the Christian Church. For the beautiful woman whom Hermas in his vision sees being washed in the river, is in fact the bride of Christ.

In one of his visions, she assured<sup>138</sup> Hermas he would experience the healing of his own sins, and those of his whole household. Indeed, that "household" consisted not only of Hermas and his wife, but also of their children.

## **91. The 'New Testament Apocrypha' on baptism as a seal**

Also from before but especially from after this time, baptism -- like the circumcision it replaced -- was clearly regarded as a "seal."<sup>139</sup> Indeed, this is seen even in many of the (sometimes rather fabulous) 'Christian apocryphal writings.'

Important in this regard are the so-called *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. There, Paul is reputed<sup>140</sup> to have regarded Thecla's baptism as "the seal in Christ."

Again, in the so-called *Acts of Paul*,<sup>141</sup> the term "seal" is used as a synonym for water baptism. There, Artemylla is stated to have been "initiated into the Lord of the sea, at the seaside." As to the mode, it significantly alleges that "Paul laid his hand and the water on Artemylla -- in [or with] the Name of Christ Jesus."

Further, in the so-called *Acts of Peter*,<sup>142</sup> a ship's captain is said to have been baptized in [or with] the sea by Peter. Indeed, that baptismal action later on seems to be called a "seal."

Then there are the so-called *Acts of Xanthippe & Polyxena*. There<sup>143</sup> the seal of "the washing of regeneration" is said to be conferred -- in baptism -- as a mark of cognizance; as a protection against evil; and as an assurance of salvation after death.

Moreover, in the so-called *Rest of the Words of Baruch*,<sup>144</sup> the "sign" of water baptism is said to have been imposed on the vanquished Judaists in Palestine -- after the revolt of Bar-Kochba in the first half of the second century A.D. There, baptism is called a "great seal."

Finally, there is -- in Coptic -- the so-called *Gospel of Thomas*.<sup>145</sup> This is, perhaps, a mixture of authentic oral tradition -- and of purely gnostic compositions. There, Jesus is reputed to have spoken about uncircumcised and/or unbaptized children in the eschatological age yet to come.

In this '*Gospel of Thomas*' our Saviour is reputed to have said: "The man old in days will not hesitate to ask a little child of seven days about the place of life. Then he will live."

Again, when "Jesus saw children who were being suckled," He is alleged to have said to His disciples: "These children who are being suckled, are like those who enter the Kingdom."<sup>146</sup> Thus the apocryphal *Gospel of Thomas*.

## **92. Justin Martyr: fetuses are conscious, and covenant infants trust in Christ**

Perhaps just after 150 A.D., the famous Samaritan Christian Apologist Justin Martyr said much of very great significance regarding the conscious ability also of infants to believe. Indeed, he even implied an actual 'seminal faith' in tiny covenant children.

Justin condemned pagan forecasts purportedly made through trying to manipulate the entrails and even the still-conscious souls of aborted human fetuses. Significantly, Justin did not hesitate to call those unbaptized aborted fetuses: "immaculate."

Justin was writing to the Pagan Emperor Antoninus Pius. In regard to the above-mentioned matter, Justin stated:<sup>147</sup> "Let even necromancy and the divinations you practise by immaculate children and the evoking of departed human souls...persuade you -- that even after death, souls are in a state of sensation!"

As Rev. Professor Dr. A. Cleveland Coxe here observes:<sup>148</sup> "Children prematurely taken from the womb were slaughtered and their entrails inspected [by pagan sorcerers], in the belief that the souls of the victim, being still conscious (as Justin is arguing), would reveal things hidden and future. Instances are abundant."

Justin elsewhere condemned also the exposure of newly-born children, rightly labelling it murder. He indicated Christians "have been taught that to expose newly-born children, is the part of wicked men."<sup>149</sup>

Contrary to pagan public opinion at that time, explained Justin, Christians themselves fear to expose children -- "lest some of them be not picked up, but die; and we become murderers.... We marry..., so that we may bring up children."<sup>150</sup>



### **93. Justin on lifelong Christian disciples (for 'seventy years')**

Indeed, while discussing sexual purity, Justin claimed that "many" male and female Christians (*polloi tines kai pollai*) had been "illuminated through the Name of Christ." Such "had been disciples to Christ from childhood" -- or '*ek paidōn emathēteuthēsan*.'<sup>151</sup>

Those persons had obviously been 'sexually pure' when infants -- and also when but little children. Moreover, Justin added that they had remained sexually pure thereafter -- and were continuing to "remain pure" (*aphoroi diamenousi*) even "at the age of sixty or seventy years."

The above-mentioned passive word *emathēteuthēsan* (from the verb *mathēteuein*), here as elsewhere means "to become a disciple" alias a 'taught' follower of Jesus. This passive word was also used by Justin elsewhere -- to refer to baptism.

Thus he also told the Jew Trypho:<sup>152</sup> "Daily some of you [Jews] are becoming disciples (*mathēteuomenoi*) in the Name of Christ..., illuminated through the Name of this Christ." Cf. Matthew 18:6 & 28:19 with Acts 2:38f.

Here, Justin's word "illuminated" -- of course -- was his regular 'persecution-evading' cryptogram for "baptized." As the Paedobaptist Scholar Rev. Prof. Dr. A.C. Barnard here remarks in his book *I Have Been Baptized*: "This refers to the time when they received their status of discipleship -- *i.e.* at [and indeed right before] their baptism. Thus, they [*viz.* those Christian infants] must have been baptized *circa* 80-90 A.D."<sup>153</sup>

So, according to Barnard's understanding of the above (150 A.D.) words of Justin Martyr, those lifelong seventy-year-old disciples had been baptized when they were infants. That, believes Barnard, would have been around A.D. 80f -- hence, still during the apostolic era.

Barnard here assumes a late date for the inscripturation of the New Testament. However, even if those canonical writings had in fact totally been reduced to writing a decade or two earlier (as we ourselves think likely) -- Justin's testimony would still suggest that Paedobaptism was indeed an apostolic practice. For at least some of the apostles were still alive around 80f A.D. Moreover, in the paraphrase of Colossians 2:1-11f attributed to the Christian Justin, we read: "We are circumcised, by baptism."

Also the great Anglican Sacramentologist Rev. Dr. William Wall has pointed out something highly significant here. Declares Wall:<sup>154</sup> "Justin's word *emathēteuthēsan* -- 'were discipled' or 'made disciples' -- is the very same word that had been used by St. Matthew in expressing our Saviour's command *mathēteusate*" in His Great Commission.

That is Christ's injunction to Ministers of the Word and Sacraments to "'disciple' all the nations" -- and to make them into His followers. But what nation is devoid of children?

Continues Wall: "Justin wrote but ninety years after St. Matthew [28:19], who wrote about fifteen years after Christ's ascension.... They that were seventy years old at this time [when Justin wrote], must have been disciples to Christ in their childhood...in the midst of the apostles' times -- and within twenty years after St. Matthew's writing."

So, when Justin was writing around 150 A.D., some of his acquaintances had been Christ's disciples already since their childhood -- and for "sixty or seventy years." This means they had already become Christian disciples or 'taught ones' around 80 A.D., and thus during the apostolic age itself. They must therefore have been 'taught' and baptized -- as those then presumed to be tiny believers even before that time of their infant baptisms.<sup>155</sup>

Those then-tiny believers -- as the covenant children of Christian parents -- therefore seem to have been regarded as themselves trusting in Christ even before their own infant baptisms. Had they died before being baptized in infancy, those tiny believers would still have gone to heaven -- as those already justified before their deaths by grace and through a God-given personal faith in Christ.

For, as Justin rightly asked the Jew Trypho:<sup>156</sup> "Will the mind of man see God at any time -- if it is uninstructed by the Holy Spirit?" No! For compare John 3:3-8 & 3:16 & 3:36. See too Hebrews 11:6 -- "without faith it is impossible to please God."

#### **94. Justin Martyr on baptizing (also infants) by the mode of sprinkling**

Later in that same *Dialogue*, Justin seemed to imply that baptism should occur by way of the mode of sprinkling. The purifying works of "this Man" Jesus Christ the Saviour, explained Justin,<sup>157</sup> "was symbolized...by those events" of sacred history recorded in Old Testament times -- such as when Moses "divided the Sea" for the God-professing Israelites and their tiny babies. Psalm 77:17-20 & 78:13-16 *cf.* First Corinthians 10:1-4.

Moses then, explained Justin, "saw the water gush out of the rock.... And Jacob, having poured oil on a stone..., is testified to -- that he had anointed a pillar to God.... The stone symbolically proclaimed Christ ['the Anointed One'].... 'Therefore God...has appointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows' [Psalm 45:7]....

"All kings and anointed persons, obtained from Him their share -- in the names of kings and 'anointed'.... The people found...twelve springs.... Even as our Christ, by being crucified on the tree and by purifying with the water, has redeemed us."

This is also linked to the baptism which Christ received --in our stead. For in terms of the prediction, explained Justin, "the Spirit of God shall rest upon Him [*cf.* Isaiah 11:1].... Jesus had gone to the river Jordan, where John was baptizing.... The Holy Ghost alighted upon Him" -- namely upon Jesus.

"He did not go to the river because **He** stood in need of baptism or of the descent of the Holy Spirit like a dove..., but because of the human race which from Adam had fallen.... This furnished men with a proof that He is the Christ ['the Anointed One'].... John remained by the Jordan, and preached the baptism of repentance.... Then the Holy Ghost and for man's sake...alighted upon Him."

## **95. Justin's comprehensive doctrine of faith and birth and baptism**

It is true that those who grow up outside the Church in Paganism -- as Justin himself had done -- first need to be catechized and to repent and to profess Jesus as their Saviour, before being baptized. This is set out at great length (over four chapters) in Justin's *First Apology*.<sup>158</sup>

A detailed look at this, will prove to be most profitable. For, although principally concerned with adult baptism -- this extended passage by no means precludes but far rather presupposes also infant baptism. Indeed, it further presupposes the baptizee's faith in Christ before his baptism. Thus it assumes the prior existence also of an infant baptizee's faith -- before he too is baptized.

In the passage, baptismal reference is made not only to John 3:3-8 (where Christ was speaking to the adult Nicodemus even about birth and rebirth). There are also implications anent the parallel 'infant blessing' passages. See Isaiah 44:1-5 & 52:15 to 53:10, and Matthew 18:3-6 & Mark 10:15 & Luke 18:17.

For one encounters instruction not just of the parent but (implicitly) also of the infant involved -- before the baptizing of the covenant child. Genesis 17:1-21; 18:18-19; 21:1-4; Psalms 22:4-10; 139:5-16; Luke 1:6,15,31,41,44; Acts 2:38f; Romans 4:11f; First Corinthians 7:14; Colossians 2:11f; Hebrews 5:12 to 6:2-7. Indeed, the influence of Justin can further be seen regarding both adult baptism and infant baptism -- also upon the later (and clearly-paedobaptistic) so-called *Apostolic Constitutions*.<sup>159</sup>

Stated Justin:<sup>160</sup> "As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed.... Then they are brought by us to where there is water.... In the Name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit -- they then receive the washing with water.... Christ also said, 'Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven'.... It is impossible for those who have once been born, to [re-]enter into their mothers' wombs [John 3:3-8]."

Certainly the above seems to presuppose that the baptismal candidates "are persuaded and believe" -- already before their baptisms. For only after they "are persuaded and believe" -- are they then "brought by us to where there is water" *etc.* Those baptisms of theirs, thus presuppose their prior belief. Even babies to be baptized, are presupposed to "believe" already -- albeit, of course, only in a childish way -- before their infant baptism. For, explained Justin, "it is impossible for those who have once been born, to [re-]enter into their mothers' wombs."

## **96. Faith before (infant) baptism in the thought of Justin Martyr**

Justin continued: "How those who have sinned and keep on repenting, shall escape their sins -- is declared by Isaiah the prophet.... He speaks thus: 'Wash you, make you clean...; though your sins be scarlet, I will make them white like wool!'" Isaiah 1:16, compare Leviticus 14:4-7 & Psalm 51:5.

Once again, the candidate is presupposed to "repent" before he or she is baptized (cf. Isaiah's "wash you"). Indeed, also the paedobaptistic implications of that prophet's predictions -- are obvious from Isaiah 32:15f & 44:1-5 and 52:15 to 53:10.

Continued Justin: "At our birth, we were born without our own knowledge or choice -- by our parents coming together.... There is pronounced over him who...has been born again and has repented of his sins, the Name of God the Father and Lord of the universe. They who lead to the laver the person that is to be washed, call him by this Name alone.... This washing is called 'illumination' -- because they who learn these things, have been illuminated in their understandings.... In the Name of Jesus Christ...and in the Name of the Holy Ghost..., he who is illuminated, is washed."

Here we should especially note Justin's reference to "our birth" and "the laver." We should also note that the baptismal 'washing' takes place only after the illumination. This repudiates illumination through baptism -- alias baptismal regenerationism. *Mutatis mutandis*, this further seems to presuppose also an infant's illumination -- before that infant's baptism.

Justin then immediately continued:<sup>161</sup> "Even the demons, having heard this washing published by the prophet [Isaiah], instigated those who enter their [pagan] temples...to sprinkle themselves.... You can understand how the demons, in imitation of what had been said by Moses, asserted that Proserpine was the daughter of Jupiter and instigated the people to set up an image of her...at the spring-heads....

"But we" Christians, concluded Justin,<sup>162</sup> "after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common -- for ourselves, and for the illuminated person.... so that we may...be found good citizens and keepers of the Commandments."

In two *Fragments* of other works, Justin further stated that "the soul can with difficulty be recalled to those good things from which it has fallen.... If at any time you show a disposition to blame yourself -- then..., through the medicine of repentance, I should cherish good hopes regarding you. But when you altogether despise fear and reject with scorn the very faith of Christ -- it were better for you that you had never been born from the womb!"<sup>163</sup> For "concerning the cleansing of the leper," one should see a setting forth of the "passion of Christ on the tree, in the salvation of those who are sprinkled with the Spirit and the water and the blood."<sup>164</sup>

## **97. Infant circumcision implies infant baptism in Justin's *Dialogue***

Significantly, in referring to cleansing, Justin reminded the Judaist Trypho of his need "to be 'baptized' -- if you touch anything prohibited by Moses."<sup>165</sup> Yet Justin's various references there, to baptism as "the water of life" *etc.*,<sup>166</sup> should not be taken in a mechanical sense.

Justin was not here advocating baptismal regenerationism. For he went on to say:<sup>167</sup> "What need have I of circumcision -- I who have been witnessed to by God? I who have been baptized with the Holy Ghost -- what need have I of that other baptism," namely that with water? "Do not

be offended at or reproach us with the bodily uncircumcision with which God has created us!"

The Samaritan Christian Justin had apparently never received the circumcision of the flesh, but only that of the heart. So he told the Judaist Trypho: "Wash therefore, and now -- be clean! Put away iniquity from your souls -- as God bids you be washed in this laver! Be circumcised with the true circumcision!"

Explained Justin to Trypho: "Even you who are 'the circumcised according to the flesh' have need of our 'circumcision'" -- the circumcision of the heart. And "we, having the latter, do not need the former.... Nor do we receive that useless baptism of cisterns [compare Jeremiah 2:13]. For it has nothing to do with this 'baptism of life.'"<sup>168</sup>

### **98. Justin's *Dialogue on repentance before baptism***

Significantly, Justin distinguishes baptism from prior repentance -- and also distinguishes the baptism of the soul from the water baptism (predicted by Isaiah in 52:15). Explains Justin:<sup>169</sup> "This laver of repentance...has been ordained on account of the transgression of God's people.... As Isaiah [52:10 to 54:6] exclaims, we have believed and testify that this very baptism which he announced -- is alone able to purify those who repented. And this is 'the water of life' [compare John 4:10-14]....

"The cisterns which you [Jews] have dug for yourselves, are broken and profitless to you. For what is the use of that baptism which cleanses the flesh and body alone? Baptize the soul from wrath and from covetousness," insisted Justin, "then, lo -- the body is pure.... And circumcise the hardness of your hearts!"

Even "when Abraham himself was in uncircumcision, he was justified" already.<sup>170</sup> For "he received circumcision for a sign..., so that it was justly recorded concerning the people that the soul which shall not be circumcised on the eighth day shall be cut off from his family."<sup>171</sup> But since Calvary, "the blood of that circumcision is obsolete....

"[For] Jesus Christ 'circumcises' all who will...with 'knives'...[cf. the sharp two-edged sword of His Written Word] -- so that they may be a righteous nation, a people keeping faith." Compare Joshua 5:2f & Isa. 26:2f with Ephesians 6:17 & Hebrews 4:12. "Come, all nations!" Isaiah 65:1-3 compare Matthew 28:19. "Behold Me..., nations which were not called by My Name!"<sup>172</sup>

Thus, "Christ was proclaimed by the prophets." For even in Joshua five, "the 'knives of stone'...mean His words whereby so many who were in error have been circumcised from uncircumcision." This has occurred through "the circumcision of the heart, with which God by Jesus commanded those from that time to be circumcised." Indeed, Joshua alias the Old Testament's "Jesus would circumcise...those who entered into the holy land."<sup>173</sup>

Justin was emphatic: "I am an uncircumcised man... But though a man be a Scythian or a Persian -- if he has a knowledge of God and of His Christ and keeps the everlasting righteous decrees, he is circumcised with 'the good and useful circumcision; and is a friend of God.'"<sup>174</sup>

Continued Justin: "Circumcision began with Abraham.... Christ the Son of God...was proclaimed as [being] about to come to all the world. We who have approached God through Him, have received not carnal but spiritual circumcision -- which Enoch and those like him observed. And we have received it through baptism.... We were sinners; we received baptism, by God's mercy; and all men may equally obtain it."<sup>175</sup>

Here, "all men" (alias every human being) would include even those who are still tiny. For "Enoch and those like him" --Enoch whose very name seems to mean 'catechized' -- appears to have walked with God even since his infancy onward.<sup>176</sup> Indeed, just like the uncircumcised Enoch -- "Abraham too was declared by God to be righteous...[quite] before he was circumcised."<sup>177</sup>

## **99. Polycarp of Smyrna's womb-to-tomb faithful covenant theology**

Polycarp, Church Overseer of Smyrna -- perhaps the Minister or 'Angel' Messenger mentioned in Revelation 2:8 -- was, like his friend Ignatius, Church Overseer of Antioch, a disciple of the Apostle John.<sup>178</sup> Indeed, Polycarp was probably baptized by John in earliest infancy and probably around 69f A.D. Thus Barnard, Wand, and the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*.<sup>179</sup>

Some time before his death, Polycarp had urged the Philippian Christians "to train up their children in the knowledge and fear of God."<sup>180</sup> Indeed, at his death -- around 155 A.D., according to the scholar Waddington -- the dying Church Overseer of Smyrna said of Jesus: "Eighty and six years do I keep on serving Him!"<sup>181</sup>

Both the Philippians and Polycarp well knew that Paul had been "circumcised the eighth day" -- and that after baptism, all Christians were to be made conformable lifelong to the fellowship of Christ's death and resurrection.<sup>182</sup> There is thus every indication that the Apostle John discipled Polycarp's parents, and baptized also Polycarp as a covenant infant (around 69 A.D.).<sup>183</sup> Polycarp's parents would then have raised the infant Polycarp and their other "children in the knowledge and fear of God."<sup>184</sup>

This would then well explain why Polycarp himself later urged the Philippian Christians to keep on doing exactly the same.<sup>185</sup> Indeed, the dying Polycarp would then have been reflecting back on all of this, when he declared about Christ around 155 A.D.: "Eighty and six years do I keep on serving Him (*douleuō Autō*)"<sup>186</sup> -- that is, from infancy onward.

Rev. Professor Dr. Joachim Jeremias (in his own famous book *The Origins of Infant Baptism*) writes about Polycarp. Explains Jeremias:<sup>187</sup> "His parents were already Christians -- or at least were converted quite soon after his birth.... The words [of Polycarp] 'service of Christ for eighty-six years' support a baptism soon after his birth."

## **100. Other mid-century martyrs who had constantly believed ever since babyhood**

Not only the adultly-martyred Polycarp had been a believer for practically his entire earthly life. The same applies also to many other Early Christians. Here, we refer particularly to those martyred just a little later -- under the (161 to 180 A.D.) reign of that famous Stoic and Pagan Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius.

Such is the evidence present in the *Martyrdom of Justin*, around 165 A.D. When his companions were being put to death together with the adultly-converted Ex-Samaritan and Apologist Justin Martyr -- many of them claimed to have been Christians from childhood onward.

Thus, Hierax said: "I always have been and always will be a Christian!" Paeon said: "I too am a Christian.... From our parents, we received this good confession." Indeed, Euelpistis added: "From my parents, also I learned to be a Christian!"<sup>188</sup>

So too the martyr Papyrus of Thyatira stated during his trial:<sup>189</sup> "I have served God from my youth up." Compare Revelation 2:18,23f & 12:17. "I have never sacrificed to idols. I am a Christian!"

The martyr Maximus added: "I do not offer sacrifice" to idols. The only exception is "the one God, to Whom...I have offered sacrifice from early youth."<sup>190</sup>

With that we may compare too the words of Irenaeus the Church Overseer of Sirmium. He declared: "I have a God Whom I have learnt to serve, starting from my earliest youth."<sup>191</sup>

Finally, consider the case of Sabas. Of him we read in an early writing that "since he was a speech-less in-fant (*nēpiou*), he had never been a follower of anyone else than of the religion [that reveres] our Saviour and Lord -- Jesus Christ."<sup>192</sup>

## **101. The Proto-Anabapticism of the apostate Marcionites**

Just before 140 A.D., the wealthy shipowner Marcion of Pontus (in Northwest Asia Minor near where the Montanists would soon take root) came into the 'orthodox' Church in Rome. In that city, after coming under the influence of the Jew-hating Syrian Gnostic (and later Docetist) Cerdo, Marcion soon developed a hatred of the Old Testament. He himself then syncretized Cerdo's false teachings with only parts of the New Testament -- to the exclusion of the rest of Holy Scripture.

Consequently, Marcion was excommunicated for heresy by and from the 'orthodox' Christian Church around 144. He then started his own rival religious movement -- in many parts of the Pagan Roman Empire. In many respects, 'Marcionism' foreshadowed not only Montanism and the later Anabaptists -- but even the subsequent Baptists, and modern Dispensationalism.

According to Rev. Professor W. Ward Gasque:<sup>193</sup> "Marcion stressed the radical nature of 'Christianity' *vis-a-vis* 'Judaism' (*sic*). In Marcion's theology, there existed a total discontinuity between the Old Testament and the New; between Israel and the Church; and even between the 'god' of the Old Testament and the Father of Jesus....

"Paul was Marcion's hero, and the one from whom (he thought) he derived his doctrine. His canons of sacred writings consisted of ten Pauline Epistles (minus the Pastorals and Hebrews) and the Third Gospel [alias Luke], both appropriately 'edited' to suit his teaching....

"His theology consisted of a series of *Antitheses* (the title of his major work) -- primarily between 'law' (the principle of the 'demiurge' and of the 'Jews') and 'Gospel' (the principle of the God of 'love' and of redemption in 'Jesus'); and between 'flesh' (that which marks the material order and is evil) and 'spirit' (the characteristic of the eternal realm). The 'law' stresses rewards and punishments, and justification by works; the 'Gospel' features faith, freedom, and grace."

### **102. The Early Church condemned Marcion and his baptismal errors**

Let us now hear the heretic Marcion's orthodox contemporary, the (*circa* 150 A.D.) Justin Martyr of Samaria. Declared Justin:<sup>194</sup> "There is Marcion, a man of Pontus, who is even at this day alive -- and teaching his disciples to believe in some other god greater than the Creator! And he, by the aid of the devils, has caused many of every nation to speak blasphemies and to deny that God is the Maker of this universe....

"Marcion of Pontus...is even now teaching men to deny that God is the Maker of all things in heaven and on earth, and that Christ predicted by the prophets is His Son." For Marcion "preaches another god besides the Creator of all -- and likewise, another son."

Now let us hear Irenaeus, one generation later. Said he:<sup>195</sup> "Simon the Samaritan was that magician of whom Luke...says, 'But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who beforetime used magical arts in that city and led astray the people of Samaria.... He had driven them mad by his sorceries' [*cf.* Acts 8:9-11*f*]. This Simon...feigned faith, supposing that the apostles themselves performed their cures by the art of magic -- and not by the power of God....

"He, then -- not putting faith in God a whit the more -- set himself eagerly to contend against the apostles...and applied himself with still greater zeal to the study of the whole magic art.... This man, then, was glorified by many -- as if he were a god.... He taught that it was himself who appeared among the Jews as the Son, but descended in Samaria as the Father, while he came to other nations in the character of the Holy Spirit....

"Now from this Simon of Samaria all sorts of heresies derive their origin.... Cerdo was one who took his system from the followers of Simon, and came to live at Rome.... He taught that the 'god' proclaimed by the law and the prophets was not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.... Marcion of Pontus succeeded him, and developed his doctrine. In so doing, he advanced the most daring blasphemy against Him Who is proclaimed as God by the law and the prophets, declaring Him to be the author of evils....



"Vain too is Marcion and his followers, when [he/]they exclude[s] Abraham from the inheritance.... [For] 'he believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness' [Romans 4:3-11f].... 'They shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and shall recline with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven' [Matthew 8:11]."

The Marcionites, explained the later Epiphanius in his famous book *Heresies*,<sup>196</sup> taught that "it is lawful to give three baptisms.... So, if anyone fall into sin after his first baptism, he may have a second; and a third, if he fall a second time."

Thus, Marcionitic Proto-Anabaptism! Indeed, the line of the heretical Rebaptists seems to run from Acts 8 and 19 through Marcion to the Montanists and the Donatists to the Petrobusians and the Anabaptists -- and then on to the Baptists, the Campbellites, the 'Latter-day Saints' (alias the Mormons), the Seventh-day Adventists, and the Jehovah witnesses *etc.* However, *per contra*: Romans 6:1-5; First Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 2:11-13; and Hebrews 6:1-6.

No wonder, then, that also Clement of Alexandria<sup>197</sup> condemned the Marcionites as heretics. Indeed, he attributed some of their errors even to the Pagan Plato (and other ancients).

Finally, the great Tertullian utterly rejected their pseudo-baptisms. For he regarded the Marcionites' god as a "kidnapper" of the baptismal water which even they admitted belongs to the matter-creating 'Old Testament God' Whom they hated. Thus, the convert to Marcion, held Tertullian, is "'baptized' to his god -- in water which belong to Another!"<sup>198</sup>

### **103. The Neo-Marcionism but continuing Proto-Anabapticism of the Montanists**

Prior to his own baptism, Montanus had himself been a paganistic priest practising the ecstatic pseudoglossolic rites of the false religion devoted to the earth-goddess Cybele. After his baptism, he syncretized Cybele's religion with Christianity.

The heresy of Montanism then took root especially in the Phrygian area of central northwestern Asia Minor -- from the middle of the second century A.D. onward. It very soon clashed with the Church Universal.

For the Early Montanists were anabaptizing and pseudopentecostalist schismatics. First inwardly and then outwardly, they separated themselves from the Early Church Universal (which they viewed as 'too worldly').

Perhaps initially somewhat influenced by the nearby Anti-Oldtestamentistic and Pseudo-Newtestamentistic apostasy of the 'rebaptistic' Marcionites at Pontus in coastal northwestern Asia Minor, it seems many of these Montanists themselves ceased practising infant baptism. After their secession from the Church Universal, they apparently left their own subsequently-born infants unbaptized -- while themselves purporting to baptize adults only.

In addition, the Montanists 'rebaptized' at least certain adults. Such were they who became Montanists after having already been baptized previously -- whether in infancy or thereafter -- either by the Early Church Universal, or by some other Christian group.

Together with the rise of such Montanistic rebaptizings (*sic*), other arcane practices too [like Proto-Pentecostalist pseudo-glossolaly] rapidly proliferated among the Montanists -- until many had slidden into non-trinitarian Hypermontanism. Thus, Philaster stated<sup>199</sup> that the Montanists were in the habit of baptizing even the dead themselves -- necrobaptism. This echoed the errors of the semi-pagan heretics mentioned in First Corinthians 15:29 -- and presaged the later submersionistic and polytheistic Mormons.

Increasingly, these Montanistic sectarians seem to have denied the validity of baptisms performed in the mainline Early Church Universal. Accordingly, they more and more 'rebaptized' such 'Ex-Catholics' converted to Montanism.

Finally, many of the latter later devolved into non-trinitarian pseudo-glossolalists -- much akin to their 'Jesus-only Pentecostalist' stepchildren today. For the Hypermontanistic 'Pepuzites' more and more blended the Holy Spirit with the incoherent ecstatic babblings of Montanus and his followers. This raised the serious question, more and more, as to whether their water baptisms could even be considered as valid.

#### **104. Athenagoras on the resurrection of aborted human fetuses**

Athenagoras, the great Christian writer of Athens, in his approximately 175 A.D. *Apology*, refuted the absurdly untrue accusations of murderous Pagans. For many were alleging, *inter alia*, that the early Christians were themselves murderers.

Retorted Athenagoras:<sup>200</sup> "Who of them can accuse us of 'murder' -- or 'cannibalism' [a reference to the 'eating' of Christ's flesh at the Lord's supper]?" However, seeing the Pagans themselves were indeed murdering by way of abortion -- and falsely, accusing also the Christians of murder -- "on what principle should we [Christians then] be committing 'murder'?"

Now "we [Christians] say that those [of their paganistic] women who use drugs to bring on an abortion, commit murder." Indeed, Christians further maintained that those paganistic men and women would have to give an account to God for those murderous abortions.

For those Pagans themselves did "not regard the very foetus in the womb as a created being" and therefore as an object of God's loving care -- which that human fetus indeed is. To the contrary, those aborting Pagans disregard the human fetus -- "and...then kill it!"

A true Christian, however, would neither murderously abort nor "expose an infant." Indeed, "those who expose" infants to the elements and abandon them, "are chargeable with child-murder." Nor would a true Christian, when a child "had been reared," ever "destroy it."

For on judgment day, warned Athenagoras, even aborted "children [will]...rise again"<sup>201</sup> -- and accuse their child-abusing paganistic parents. For "all are to rise again -- those who have died in infancy, as well as others." This shows that the resurrection is "in consequence of the purpose of God in forming man -- and the nature of the beings so formed."

### **105. Theodotus: sentient human fetuses "share a better fate"**

The Church Father Theodotus was an anti-gnostic theologian of the Early Alexandrian School. Around 180 A.D., he wrote<sup>202</sup> that "regeneration is by water and spirit" -- and that "baptism...is the sign of regeneration." However, nowhere did Theodotus suggest that baptism itself effects regeneration.

Indeed, it is clear Theodotus believed that the (intra-uterine?) water and spirit of regeneration operates before baptism. For he apparently assumed the salvation of even unbaptized human fetuses.

Thus Theodotus declared<sup>203</sup> that after their deaths, "aborted infants share a better fate.... An ancient said [quite rightly] that an embryo is alive.... The soul [of the embryo] enters into the womb after the latter has been cleansed and prepared for conception." Indeed, the new soul is "introduced" into the mother's womb "by one of the angels who preside over generation and who, foreknowing the time of conception, moves the woman to [sexual] intercourse....

"On the seed being deposited, the 'spirit' which is in the 'seed' is so to speak 'appropriated' [by the woman's egg-cell], and is thus assumed into conjunction -- in the process of formation [of the embryo].... When the angels give glad tidings to the barren, they introduce souls [right] at conception.... In the Gospel [Luke 1:43], 'the baby leaped up' as a living being" -- when John the Baptist three months before his own birth recognized the Saviour just conceived within His Own mother's womb.

### **106. Irenaeus of Lyons on covenant children from conception onward**

Around 185 A.D., we encounter Polycarp's disciple Irenaeus -- the later Church Overseer of Lyons. Irenaeus was probably born to Christian parents near Smyrna, and thus baptized in infancy. When very young, he had often listened to the preaching of Polycarp the disciple of the apostle John himself. Cf. First John 2:12-14 & 3:7-9 with Revelation 1:1f & 2:8f.

The great Anglican baptismal scholar Rev. Dr. Wall here makes an important observation. "In an age so nigh the apostles, and in a place where one of them had so lately lived -- the Christians could not be ignorant [about] what had been done in their time, in a matter so public and notorious as is the baptizing...of infants."

Now Irenaeus affirmed<sup>204</sup> not the pre-conceptual but certainly the pre-natal existence of the human soul. For our Saviour too had assumed our human nature at His conception. Indeed, He kept it throughout His subsequent human life (and for evermore) -- in order to regenerate His children, regardless of their various different ages.

Jesus, said Irenaeus,<sup>205</sup> was "thirty years old when He came to be baptized, then possessing the full age of a teacher.... Being a teacher, He therefore possessed the age of a teacher. He did not despise or evade any condition of humanity.... But He sanctified every age [of humanity] by that period corresponding to it which belonged to Himself.

"For He came to save all...who are 'born again' to God -- infants and children and boys and youths.... He therefore passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, thus sanctifying infants; a child for children, thus sanctifying those who are of this age; being at the same time made to them an example of piety, righteousness and submission; a youth for youths, becoming an example to youths, and thus sanctifying them for the Lord."

Irenaeus also stated<sup>206</sup> "that the Spirit of God...descended upon Him [Jesus].... Again, giving to the disciples the power of regeneration unto God, He said to them: 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them'....

"For God promised that in the last times He would pour Him [the Spirit] upon His servants and handmaids, so that they might prophesy. Therefore He did also descend upon the Son of God made the Son of men -- becoming accustomed, in fellowship with Him, to dwell in the human race."

### **107. Irenaeus on the baptismal sprinklings of saved infants**

Irenaeus continued: "This Spirit...as Luke says, descended at the Day of Pentecost upon the disciples, after the Lord's ascension -- having power to admit all nations to the entrance of life and to the opening of the New Covenant.... "Dry earth does not bring forth, unless it receives moisture. In like manner we also, being originally a dry tree, could never have brought forth fruit unto life -- without the voluntary rain from above."<sup>207</sup> For our bodies have received unity among themselves, by means of that laver."

"Gideon, that Israelite whom God chose so that he might save the people of Israel from the power of foreigners, foreseeing this gracious gift..., prophesied that there would be dryness upon the fleece of the wool [a type of the people] -- on which alone at first there had been no dew.<sup>208</sup> This indicated that they should no longer have the Holy Spirit from God.

"As Isaiah [5:6] says, 'I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it; but that the dew, which is the Spirit of God Who descended upon the Lord, would be diffused throughout all the earth [Isaiah 11:2].... This Spirit again He did confer upon the Church.... The Spirit therefore descended under the predestined dispensation. And the Son of God (the Only-begotten Who is also the Word of the Father) coming in the fullness of time -- having become incarnate in man for the sake of man -- fulfilled all the conditions of human nature."<sup>209</sup>

Irenaeus accordingly believed that also infants could be born again. For he believed the Son had revealed -- and still does and shall keep on revealing the Father even to "babes" -- to "whom He wills; and when He wills"; and "to all who believe in Him."<sup>210</sup>

Moreover, Irenaeus apparently also believed<sup>211</sup> that infants deemed to have been regenerated -- should also be baptized, soon after their birth. "The Word of God forms us in the womb. For the Lord said to Jeremiah [1:5], 'before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; and before you went forth from the belly, I sanctified you'" [**past** tense].

Therefore," concluded Irenaeus, "we are by the Word formed in the womb.... Man, with respect to that formation which was after Adam, having fallen into transgression -- needs the laver of regeneration."

Similarly, added Irenaeus,<sup>212</sup> "Naaman of old -- when suffering leprosy -- was purified upon his being baptized." Not that it was this 'baptism'itself which cleansed Naaman. For he had clearly repented even before going to the waters of the Jordan.

Yet Naaman was "an indication to us. For as we are lepers in sin -- we are made clean by means of the sacred water and the invocation of the Lord..., being spiritually regenerated as new-born babes. Even as the Lord has declared: 'Except a man be born again through water and Spirit, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven.'"

### **108. Polycrates the Church Overseer of Ephesus had "always" walked with God**

About 191 A.D., a message<sup>213</sup> was sent to Rome by Polycrates -- Church Overseer of Ephesus. It is practically certain that the Ephesian Polycrates had been a covenant child from his conception onward -- generated from and born of and raised by Christian parents. Ephesians 4:4f; 4:30; 5:25f; 6:1-4. Indeed, he mentioned that also seven of his close relatives became Church Overseers -- just as he himself had done.

Moreover, continued Polycrates<sup>214</sup> "I now, my brethren, have lived in the Lord sixty-five years.... I have not become grey-headed in vain.... I have always[!] walked in Christ Jesus."

Hence it seems practically certain that Polycrates -- and each of his seven episcopal relatives too?! -- was baptized in infancy, as a child of the covenant, around 125 A.D. See too the similar case of Polycarp, Church Overseer of Smyrna,<sup>215</sup> who was born as a believer alias a 'Christ-serving' baby around 69 A.D.

The great antiquary Rev. Professor Dr. Joachim Jeremias makes a very telling remark about Polycrates. The latter himself, observes Jeremias,<sup>216</sup> "refers to his age -- because of his concern for his long and unimpeachable Christian standing. This passage, taking us back into the year 125/6 [A.D.] as the year of Polycrates' birth, also favours the conjecture that [his] baptism took place soon after birth."

### **109. Clement of Alexandria: pagan sprinklings anticipated Christian baptism**

Around 195 A.D., the celebrated Catechist Clement of Alexandria claimed that paganistic washing or "baptism"...was handed down to the [heathen] poets from Moses" -- and from the Mosaic sprinklings. See: Exodus 24:6f; Leviticus 14:4-7; Numbers 19:4f; Hebrews 9:10-21. "The Jews," explained Clement, "wash frequently -- even after being in bed.... So the Pagans copied the Jews.... Telemachus...washed his hand in the hoary sea."<sup>217</sup>

Similarly, the heathen "Branchus, the seer, when purifying the Milesians from plague," by "sprinkling the multitude with branches of laurel, led off the hymn" *etc.*<sup>218</sup> Consequently, Clement

urged the Pagans to turn from their degenerate washings toward Christian baptism -- as the only true continuation of the Old Testament **sprinklings** the heathen had corrupted.

Clement further urged the Pagans:<sup>219</sup> "Behold, like Elijah, the rain of salvation.... Swine, it is said, like mud better than pure water.... Receive, then, the water of the Word; wash, you polluted ones; purify yourselves from [heathen] custom, by sprinkling yourselves with the true drops!"

### **110. Clement of Alexandria: conscious embryos and infant believers**

Clement also reminded<sup>220</sup> Christians that God Himself had said: "Increase and multiply!" Genesis 1:28. "Let the pagan Greeks then feel ashamed...when they expose the offspring of men!"<sup>221</sup> Yet mercifully "the Romans, in the case of a pregnant woman being condemned to death, do not allow her to undergo punishment -- till she has given birth."

For even the pagan Romans regarded unborn babies as fully human, and their lives as so precious that they were protected by their laws. To Clement himself, aborted human embryos and slain infants are led postmortally into everlasting life -- by caretaker angels.<sup>222</sup> This is apparently so, because they have already been made righteous without baptism.

Indeed, Clement does seem to be referring to baptism where he speaks about [the family of] Noah being justified alias made righteous before the flood -- and where he speaks about "the seal of preaching." For where apparently calling baptism the seal of righteousness, Clement seems to be teaching that one is made righteous before being baptized.<sup>223</sup>

Moreover, Clement's writing *Protrepticus* alludes<sup>224</sup> not only to the "regeneration passage" in John<sup>225</sup> but also to the "infant believers' passages" in the other Gospels<sup>226</sup> -- as well as to the great "baptismal passage"<sup>227</sup> in Justin's *Apology*. This clearly evidences Clement's own commitment even to infant baptism for covenant children. It also seems to imply he believed them to have been justified before receiving that sacrament during their babyhood.

### **111. Clement's *Paidagogue* presupposes belief within babies**

Important is Clement's work *Paidagōgos* (alias '*The Child-Instructor*'). There, in often allegorical but sometimes literalistic language, Clement declares:<sup>228</sup> "Paedogogy is the training of children (*paidōn agōgē*).... It remains for us to consider the children to whom Scripture points.... Jesus said [Matthew 19:4], 'Permit the children, and forbid them not to come to Me! For of such is the Kingdom of heaven.'

"What the expression means the Lord Himself shall declare, saying, 'Except you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven' [Matthew 18:3] -- in that place not speaking figuratively, but [speaking] about regeneration.... 'Have you never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have perfected praise?' [Matthew 21:6 cf. Psalm 8:2]....

"Again, by Moses, He commands 'two young pigeons or a pair of turtle-doves to be offered for sin' -- in respect of 33-day-old infants [Leviticus 15:29 & 12:8 *cf.* Luke 1:24].... We also, in truth, honouring the fairest and most perfect objects in life with an appellation derived from the word 'children' [*paid-es*] -- have named training *paid-eia*, and discipline *paid-agōgia*. Discipline (*paid-agōgia*) we declare to be right guidance -- from childhood [*paid-eia*].... Jesus placed a little child in their midst, saying, 'Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same shall be the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven' [Matthew 18:4]....

"The child (*nēpios*) is...simple, guileless, and destitute of hypocrisy, straightforward and upright in mind.... The band of infants...is delicate as a child.... Horse's colts, and the little calves of cows, and the lion's whelp, and the stag's fawn, and the child of man -- are looked upon with pleasure by their fathers and mothers. Thus also the Father of the universe cherishes affection towards those who have fled to Him.... Who, then, is this infant child?... Scripture calls the infant children: 'lambs.'" John 21:15.

Clement continues in his *Paidagōgos*:<sup>229</sup> "Faith, with baptism, is trained by the Holy Spirit.... For as many as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ [Galatians 3:26-29 *cf.* Romans 4:11*f*].... Jesus therefore, rejoicing in the Spirit, said: 'I thank You, O Father, God of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes' [Luke 10:21 *cf.* Matthew 11:25]....

"Upon our regeneration, we attained that perfection after which we aspired.... At the moment of the Lord's baptism, there sounded a voice from heaven as a testimony to the Beloved, 'You are My beloved Son! Today have I begotten You'....

"Why was He, the Perfect One, baptized? It was necessary.... He was 'perfected' -- alone -- by the washing of baptism." Further, "He was sanctified by the descent of the Spirit [again before His baptism].... The same also takes place in our case -- [we] whose Example Christ became."

## **112. Clement on Christ's own baptism, unweaned babies, and baptismal 'showers'**

It is important to note that Clement here compares our own baptism with that of the sinless Christ (alias "the Perfect One"). Hence, it is arguable that to Clement our sins are no more washed away during our baptism -- than our sins were washed away from the sinless Christ (our "Example") during His baptism. For it was at Christ's death and not at His baptism that our sins were laid upon Him and then washed away through His blood. Indeed, Christ Himself -- Who had no sin, even from His conception onward -- was totally unregeneratable also during His baptism.

Clement next seeks "to explain what is said by the apostle: 'I have fed you [as children in Christ] with milk, not with meat. For you were not able. Neither yet are you now able' [First Corinthians 3:2].... The expression 'I have given you to drink' (*epotisa*), is the symbol of perfect appropriation. For those who are full-grown, are said to drink; babes, to suck....

"In saying, therefore, 'I have given you milk to drink' -- has He not indicated the knowledge of the truth?... With milk, then -- the Lord's nutriment -- **we are nursed directly we are born**.... As soon as we are regenerated, we are honoured by receiving the good news of...Jerusalem above, in which...milk and honey fall in showers....

"For children at the breast, milk alone suffices.... The contents of the stomach too, at first, are milky.... But when it is formed into a compact consistency in the womb, by the natural and warm spirit by which the embryo is fashioned it becomes a living creature.

"Further also, the child, after birth -- is nourished.... Such as is the union of the Word with baptism -- is the agreement of milk with water.... He who prophesies the birth of the child, says: 'Butter and honey shall He eat' [Isaiah 7:15].... The Word, then, Who leads the children to salvation -- is appropriately called 'the Instructor' (*Paidagōgos*)."

In all of the above, no matter how figurative the language, several things are clear. Firstly, God's people are like babies. Secondly, God's people also include babies -- and even fetuses and embryos. Thirdly, such persons are born again -- quite before they receive the showers of baptism.

The classicists Stander and Louw are themselves unsympathetic toward Paedobaptism as an apostolic or even as an early-patristic institution. Yet even they concede<sup>230</sup> that Clement, here "countering the attacks of the Gnostics, again uses the figurative expression 'children' and 'little ones' -- when he refers to baptismal practices."

### **113. Baptist concessions anent Clement of Alexandria regarding Christian infants**

Also the Baptist A.W. Argyle, Regent's Park College tutor at Oxford, concedes<sup>231</sup> that "there appears to be one[!] cryptic reference to infant baptism in an allegorical passage of the *Paedagogus*." Argyle is referring to Clement's description of "children who are drawn out of the water" by the fisher of men.

Here Clement, obviously thinking of baptism, wrote:<sup>232</sup> "Let our seals be either a dove, or a fish, or a ship scudding before the wind, or a musical lyre -- which Polycrates used.... If there be one fishing, he will remember the apostle [or *apostolou*] -- and the small children [or *paidiōn*] drawn out of the water."

This clearly proves that "the apostle" applied "the water" even to "small children." It further strongly implies that the baptism also of infants is indeed both a sealing and also an apostolic ordinance.

It will be remembered that also the two classical scholars Stander and Louw -- are unfavourable toward the apostolic and early-patristic practices of Paedobaptism. Very significantly, however, even they here concede: "It is quite possible that the words 'fisherman' and 'children drawn out of the water' function as baptismal terminology."



Yet the Baptist Argyle himself should have conceded there is indeed more than just "one" reference to infant salvation in the relevant book of Clement's *Paidagōgos*. For at the end of its last chapter -- in its closing 'Hymn to Christ the Saviour' [composed by Clement] -- we read:<sup>233</sup>

"Wise Shepherd, tending lambs of the royal flock, bring  
Your simple children in -- so that they may sing...  
their hymns of praise with guileless lips to Christ their King!...  
Fisher of men, You bring to life --  
gathering in pure fishes...from the billowy strife!"

Such "pure fishes" Clement explains further, are "nourished by the milk of heaven given to our tender palate -- and by the milk of wisdom pressed out from the breast of that bride of grace." By "pure fishes" Clement here clearly means regenerated Christians.

Those 'pure fishes' certainly include baptized babies. For Clement has even the latter exclaim: "Filled by the dewy Spirit [the rain-like *Pneuma*]; distilled from the breast of fair Reason [the divine *Logos*] -- let us sucklings join to raise our hymns of praise with pure lips!"

#### **114. Clement on 'the dew of the Spirit' within and upon an infant baptizee**

Also important is Clement's discourse *Who is the Rich Man that shall be Saved?* There, he claimed that (baptized) Christians are "protected" -- not by baptism itself, but "by the power of God the Father; and the blood of God the Son; and the dew of the Holy Spirit....

"Forgiveness of past sins, then, God gives.... This is to repent -- to condemn the past deeds and beg oblivion of them from the Father of all. Only He is able to undo what has been done -- by mercy proceeding from Him -- to blot out former sins by the dew of the Spirit."

The above phrase 'God the Father; and the blood of God the Son; and the dew of the Spirit' -- is obviously a reference to trinitarian baptism. So too is the yet further phrase 'blot out former sins by the dew of the Spirit.'

Clement then goes on to refer to a young man -- who had been adopted by the very presbyter who had previously 'baptized' him. That young person, explains Clement -- after subsequent backsliding -- was later again "'baptized' a second time: with tears."<sup>234</sup>

Here is no sacramental rebaptism. But here is indeed a striking statement which proves that repentance before baptism must continue, increasingly and repeatedly, lifelong also thereafter.

#### **115. Clement on the lifelong disciplining of Christian infants**

In Clement's *Stromata*, there are still more passages bearing on this subject. There, he brought the Johannine phrase "born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh" -- into connection with regeneration.<sup>235</sup>

He also quoted Genesis 1:28, and urged marriage -- "for our country's sake; for the succession of children; and [for]...the perfection of the world."<sup>236</sup> Indeed, he even enjoined all children: "Honour your father and your mother, so that it may go well with you!"<sup>237</sup>

Clement further insisted that God's "elect shall not labour in vain, nor procreate children to be cursed. For they are seed -- blessed by the Lord."<sup>238</sup> Clement then added that "he who procreates children according to the Word, and who educates and teaches them in the Lord, bears a good catechism...to the elect seed."

Moreover, continued Clement, "even a 'bishop' [or 'church overseer'] is to rule well -- at home -- over his 'faithful children.'"<sup>239</sup> No celibacy of clergy here! Also the old women are to "counsel the young women to be...lovers of their husbands and lovers of their children [Titus 2:3f]." For "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled [Hebrews 13:4]."<sup>240</sup>

Clement went on to point out that "those who fall into sin after baptism, are those who are subjected to discipline.... Therefore, this is what the Lord says: 'Every alien son is uncircumcised in heart.... There shall not enter one of the strangers into the midst of the house of Israel!'" Ezekiel 44:9f.

However, concluded Clement, "the righteous Job says: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there' [Job 1:21].... It is as a just man that he departs." Christ's phrase "'unless you be converted and become as children' [Matthew 18:3]...., shows that He would have us to be such as He also generates us from our mother." Hence, this is symbolized by "the water."

## **116. The Pre-Tertullianic Church never denied inherited sin in covenant babies**

Rev. Professor Dr. Kurt Aland of the University of Münster (where the revolutionary Anabaptists formerly built their 'New Jerusalem'), concedes that the practice of infant baptism in the Church today is both needful and legitimate. Yet he also considers that infant baptism is **certainly provable** -- **only** from the third century onward.

Aland argues:<sup>241</sup> "In the Acts of the Apostles...we must conclude that infant baptism was not practised at that time -- since these [covenantal] infants were [then] regarded as *hagia* [before baptism]. The Ancient Church perpetuated this tradition -- and only at the end of the second century departed from it, and that, on theological grounds.

"So long as the Church assumed that children born of Christian parents were sinless, it abstained from infant baptism. So soon as it recognized the falsity of this presupposition, it began to ask for and introduce infant baptism.... The sinful corruption of children from their birth is admitted.... The necessity of infant baptism follows on it."

The serious flaw in the above reasoning, is the statement that the Church before A.D. 200 assumed that "children born of Christian parents were sinless" from their conception until at least their birth. However, the Church never so assumed. *Per contra*: Genesis 6:5 & 8:21; Job 14:1-4 & 15:14f & 25:4f; Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12-18; Ephesians 2:1-3; *etc.*

Aland's further error, somewhat related to the last-mentioned, is his misperception: "In the Acts of the Apostles...infant baptism was not practised" *etc.* Hopefully, we showed the opposite.

Aland is apparently attempting to reconstruct early church history -- from a 'Carlstadian perspective' (which syncretizes Lutheranism and Anabapticism). For Aland wrongly assumes that, before Tertullian, the Early Church (heretically) upheld the sinlessness of the babies of believers -- and that, not till just before Tertullian, infant baptism was unknown to the Church.

From these misassumptions, Aland wrongly concludes that the Patristic Church and even the Apostolic Church never baptized covenant infants at all -- until it rightly perceived also them to be the sinful human beings which Aland rightly believes there indeed are. **This** perception is indeed correct. But Aland incorrectly alleges it began -- only at the beginning of the **third** century.

Yet the real facts are quite different. Because the Apostolic Church itself regarded even unbaptized covenant children as saved sinners -- it therefore went right ahead and baptized them, also in apostolic times.

Some 150 years later, by the end of the second century, however -- the Church was beginning to get influenced by incipient Manichaeism. This seems to be the reason why it then, for the first time, fabulously began to invest sin-cleansing power into baptism. Until then, baptism had been administered in great simplicity. Yet it had previously been given only to those adults and infants who were regarded as prebaptismally regenerated -- in spite of their inherited original sin.

For the Apostolic Church knew of the inherent prenatal sinfulness even of covenant children. Yet it also knew of their postnatal infant baptism. So too did the Apostolic Fathers, the Apologists, and the various Patristic Fathers even before Tertullian. Indeed, this evidence is further strengthened by that of archaeological findings.

### **117. Archaeological evidence anent infant faith within covenant children**

Round about 200 A.D., we encounter some striking evidence from Egypt favouring the infant baptism of covenant children. The *Old Egyptian Ordinance* alias the *Egyptian Church Order*, dating from no later than the last part of the second century A.D., declared that (the day before the baptism of the candidates) the church overseer was to "seal their foreheads....

"The water shall flow through the baptismal pool, or pour into it from above," stated the ancient *Egyptian Church Order* -- "except when there is scarcity of water.... Then, use whatever water you can find....

"**First baptize the little ones.** Those who can speak for themselves, shall do so. If not, their parents or some other relative shall speak for them. Then baptize the men, and last of all the women."<sup>242</sup>

Now the British Museum in London displays a mummy of an Egyptian child. It dates from about 200 A.D., and is only 74 centimeters long. Its coffin depicts a little girl with crossed hands, holding a cross. She is estimated to have died when only four years old.

It is clear that the buriers believed the four-year-old had died trusting in the work of Christ on the cross. It is therefore probable that she had been baptized at some time prior to her early death.<sup>243</sup> Indeed, the contemporaneous Egyptian evidence of Clement<sup>244</sup> and Origen,<sup>245</sup> would fully justify this probability.

### **118. The catacombs corroborate infant faith an infant baptism**

Looking next at the Roman catacombs, from about the same time or perhaps even earlier onward,<sup>246</sup> it is seen that some epitaphs -- such as 'my sweetest child' and 'innocent little lamb' etc.<sup>247</sup> -- suggest that the one so commemorated, died at a very early age. Other wordings often give the specific age at death -- together with an indication of the godly faith even of very young Christians.

One of the most famous inscriptions, is that for Julia Florentina. She lived eighteen months and twenty-two days, and was seen to be a believer before she drew her last breath.

See Stander and Louw's *Baptism in the Early Church*.<sup>248</sup> Also see Diehl's book *Ancient Christian Latin Inscriptions*; Didier's work *Infant Baptism in the Tradition of the Church*; and Ferguson's essay *Inscriptions and the Origin of Infant Baptism*.<sup>249</sup>

Here are two more samples: "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour! To Pastor -- a good and innocent son, who lived 4 years, 5 months and 26 days. Vitalis and Marcellina, his parents." Once more: "To Leopardus, a neophyte, who lives 3 years, 11 months. Buried on the 24th of March. In peace."<sup>250</sup>

Here are another couple of inscriptions regarding Christian babies who, apparently as little believers, each died when less than fourteen months old. "Matronata Matrona, who lived a year and 52 days . Pray for thy parents!" Again: "We, Crescentius and Micina, commend...our daughter Crescen[tina], who lived 10 months and . . . days."

All of the above probably, though not provably so, died baptized. In such cases, the sacrament would regularly have been administered not by submersion but by way of sprinkling. Too, it would have been administered precisely to such tiny ones deemed to believe in Jesus.

For, as the great church historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff observes, "pouring or affusion is...found on pictures in the Roman catacombs -- one of which De Rossi [the greatest authority thereon] assigns to the second century (in the cemetery of Calixtus). 'It is remarkable that in almost all the earliest representations of baptism that have been preserved to us, this [the pouring of water from vessels over the body] is the special act represented.'"

Also the great systematic theologian and dogmatics historian, Rev. Professor Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, has drawn a similar conclusion. "Affusion on the head of a recipient," he explains, "is the ordinary mode of baptism depicted in the early decorations of the Roman catacombs."<sup>251</sup>

### **119. Ward and Schaff on the archaeology of Paedobaptism**

So too Australia's greatest authority on Presbyterian church history, Rev. Dr. Rowland Ward. In his 1991 *Baptism in Scripture and History*, he points out:<sup>252</sup> "It shows the desire to retain what would have been, in my judgement, the common mode during the open air ministry of the Baptist and the Apostles -- namely pouring or sprinkling the head of the candidate.... C.F. Rogers<sup>253</sup> suggested this interpretation in 1903, in his *Baptism and Christian Archaeology*....

"The archaeological evidence unearthed during the past 100 years, has confirmed this thesis. Nearly 400 examples of ecclesiastical fonts belonging to the period 230 - 680 A.D. have been located. The archaeological data is discussed in such works<sup>254</sup> as *The Architectural Setting of Baptism*....

"The fonts discovered, show that the general practice was for the candidate to enter.... His head was then dipped in a basin arrangement called the laver; or else the water was simply poured. Drawings on the walls of the catacombs and elsewhere back into the second century, show a similar mode."

However, whether the Christian died baptized or not, as Schaff himself rightly observes,<sup>255</sup> a "prominent feature of the catacombs is their hopeful and joyful eschatology. They proclaim in symbols and words a certain conviction of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, rooted and grounded in a living union with Christ in this world."

The above evidence would strongly indicate that not just Christian parents but also their early-dying children -- thus "sleep in Jesus." First Thessalonians 4:14. The matter of their having been baptized or not, appears to be quite irrelevant to the factuality of the confidence with which their heavenly destiny is assumed.

### **120. Tertullian's sad shift toward Montanistic Antipaedobaptism**

From approximately 200 A.D. onward, Tertullian of Carthage provides us with much information about infant faith -- and also about the doctrine of infant baptism. Born a non-covenantal Pagan, and converted only as an adult, Tertullian himself was admitted into the Universal Church and baptized as an adult only after he professed his faith.

This was, of course, merely a profession but not necessarily a possession of faith. Yet it seems to have been genuine, even though Tertullian later started drifting off toward the semimontanizing heresy of pseudoglossolalic Montanism.

The latter championed ongoing revelation, deemed to occur in 'miraculous' tongues-speakings. It had also introduced the sacramentalistic innovation of the [re-]baptism of

adults only -- and apparently only by 'magical' submersionism alone. These, it seems, were practices Montanism had adopted from the paganistic 'mystery' religions -- such as the *taurobolium* of Cybele worship<sup>256</sup>

Notwithstanding Tertullian's semimontanizing drift toward anti-paedobaptistic Montanism, his often varying views on a whole range of subjects -- usually orthodox, but at other times occasionally heterodox -- are still extremely valuable.<sup>257</sup> It should also be noted that according to Augustine, Tertullian finally abandoned his Semi-Montanistic views and connections. Thereafter he is reputed to have returned to the mainline Universal Church -- with its doctrine of baptizing also children of the covenant in their infancy, by the Scriptural sign of sprinkling.

Sometimes Tertullian was rather heterodox. Yet, even where counselling that infant baptism be delayed, he was very aware that the latter was indeed a long-established ecclesiastical practice -- which also he probably realized had been inaugurated by Christ Himself.

"The delay of baptism is preferable," Tertullian alleged. That is so -- "principally, however, in the case of little children." It is true, conceded Tertullian, that "the Lord does indeed say, 'Forbid them not to come unto Me!'" But, asked Tertullian, "why does the innocent period of life hasten to the 'remission of sins?'"<sup>258</sup> This certainly seems to suggest that the Church Universal was then baptizing infants, allegedly since apostolic times, to which infant baptisms Tertullian was here objecting.

Argyle the Baptist<sup>259</sup> succinctly shows us just how much of a sacramentalist the adult immersionist Tertullian became. Says Argyle: "From Tertullian's writings, we can piece together the form that was used in baptism.... The candidate solemnly renounced the devil and his pomp and his angels.<sup>260</sup> Then he was thrice immersed [thus not Tertullian but only Argyle]<sup>261</sup> in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit -- in water previously consecrated."<sup>262</sup>

Further, continues Argyle, "milk and honey<sup>262</sup> were administered to the newly-baptized.... Tertullian is the first writer<sup>263</sup> who clearly mentions...the post-baptismal administering of unction, the anointing with olive-oil, followed by the laying-on of hands -- together with the making of the sign of the cross on the forehead of the baptized.... The spirit is bodily washed in the waters, and the flesh is spiritually cleansed in the same."<sup>264</sup>

### **121. Tertullian's orthodox view of prenatal infants as sentient**

At other times and as regards other matters, however, Tertullian was very orthodox. For he was particularly helpful in the realm of prenatal anthropology. Opposing paganistic abortion, he enjoined Christians: "In our case, murder being once and for all forbidden, we may not destroy even the fetus in the womb.... To hinder a birth, is merely a speedier man-killing. There is no difference -- whether you take away a life that has been born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth. That is a [hu]man, which is going to be [an adult] one. You already have the fruit in its seed."<sup>265</sup>

Elsewhere, Tertullian even added the following:<sup>266</sup> "The Law of Moses [Exodus 21:22-25] indeed punishes with due penalties the man who shall cause abortion -- inasmuch as there exists

already the rudiment of a human being." Moses clearly implies that the woman's unborn 'fruit' is indeed a child. And David implies that his own 'ego' began (and got stained with sin) right at conception -- even before he was subsequently "formed" in his mother's womb, when he "hoped upon" or "trusted in" God.<sup>267</sup>

What then is the position as to the infant's soul before his or her birth? Held Tertullian: "The soul possessed this uniform and simple nature from the beginning.... Those who profess the truth, care nothing about their opponents -- especially such of them as begin by maintaining that the soul is not conceived in the womb...but is im-pressed from without upon the infant [only] before his complete vitality but after the process of parturition [or birth].

"The Stoics," Tertullian explained further,<sup>268</sup> quite wrongly "begin by maintaining that the soul is not conceived in the womb -- nor is produced at the time that the flesh is moulded." Indeed, even "Plato himself...tells us that the soul..., originating elsewhere and externally to the womb, is inhaled when the new-born infant first draws breath [at his or her birth nine months after conception].... This view of his, is merely fictitious.... These gentlemen were too modest to come to terms with women on the mysteries of childbirth....

"Give us then your testimony, you mothers -- whether yet pregnant, or after delivery!" Give us your testimony "whether you feel, in the embryo within you, any vital force [or vivacity] other than your own!... Inasmuch as sustenance by food and the want thereof, growth, decay, fear, and motion are conditions of the soul or life -- he who experiences them, must be alive!"

Now and then, babies are sometimes born dead. Tertullian explains that such "infants are still-born. But how so -- unless they had had life" previously? For "where does it come from that, from similarity of soul, we resemble our parents in disposition..., if we are not produced from this 'seed of the soul'?... A [hu]man's nativity" or 'generatedness' exists "from his earliest conception."

Accordingly, "his soul also draws...its origin from that moment. To this ['nativity'], likewise belongs the 'inbreathing' of the soul" -- the imparting of the human soul by God Himself. Genesis 2:7 compare Zechariah 12:1.

## **122. Physical life and spiritual recognition both start at conception**

Tertullian also declared: "Consider the wombs of the most sainted women, maternally implanted with the life within them." For "their babes...were not only alive within, but were even endowed with prophetic intuition. See how the inward parts of Rebecca are disquieted [Genesis 25:22-25] -- though her giving birth is as yet remote.... A twin offspring chafes within the mother's womb....

"Consider again these extraordinary conceptions...of the barren woman [Elisabeth] and the virgin [Mary].... One of them [Elisabeth] was too old to bear seed, and the other [Mary] was pure from the contact of man.... However, even these [offspring of Elisabeth and Mary] have life -- each of them in his mother's womb....

"Mary magnifies the Lord, [for] Christ had stirred her up within [Luke 1:46].... Elisabeth exults with joy, [for] John had leaped [up] in[side] her womb [Luke 1:41f]. The mothers each recognize their own offspring, being moreover each **recognized by their [unborn] infants**. These were, therefore, of course, alive -- and were not merely [living] souls but [immortal] spirits also."

Indeed, it seems **the unborn John** six months after his own conception and three months before his own birth **recognized** not just Mary walking toward his own mother Elisabeth. The unborn John then recognized Jesus too -- Who had at that time only just been conceived within Mary. Could John then not also at the same time much rather have acknowledged his own God?!

Tertullian continued: "Accordingly, you read the Word of God which was spoken to Jeremiah, 'Before I formed you in the belly I knew you!' Since God forms us in the womb, He also breathes upon us [when starting to form us].

"So did He also do at the first creation [Genesis 2:7], when 'the Lord God formed man and breathed into him the breath of life.' Nor could God have known man in the womb -- except in his entire nature.... 'Before you came forth out of the womb -- I sanctified you.'" Jeremiah 1:5. Can one be sanctified, without first being regenerated?

"How then," Tertullian goes on, "is a living being conceived? Is the substance of both body and soul formed together, at one and the same time? Or does one of them precede the other in natural formation?... Both are conceived and formed, and absolutely simultaneously....

"Not a moment's interval occurs, even at their conception. A prior place can be assigned to neither. Consider what occurs at man's earliest existence -- in the light of what occurs to him at the very end [of his existence]. As death is defined to be nothing else than the separation of body and soul -- life, which is the opposite of death, is susceptible of no other definition than the conjunction of body and soul. If the severance happens at one and the same time to both substances by means of death -- then the law of their [initial] combination ought to assure that it [too] occurs simultaneously....

"Life begins at conception.... The soul also begins from conception. For life takes its commencement at the same moment and in the same place as the soul does.... Adam's flesh was formed of clay.... The clay and the breath combined at the first creation, in forming the individual man [Genesis 2:7].... We still declare that they are...contemporaneous and simultaneous in origin.... Even now, the two substances [body and soul], although diverse from each other, flow forth simultaneously."

It should be remembered that Tertullian elsewhere declared:<sup>269</sup> "I shall begin with baptism.... We are taken up as new-born children." Indeed, he also insisted<sup>270</sup> that "young novices...are only just beginning to bedew their ears with divine discourses...as whelps in yet early infancy and with...one single sprinkling." Deuteronomy 29:29 & 31:11-13 & 32:2-7. See later below!



### **123. Tertullian: sprinkling the preferred mode of postnatal baptism**

We now need to move on from prenatal human life and consciousness and even prophethood -- to postnatal baptism. We have already seen that Tertullian at one point of his life backed away from the Historic-Christian doctrine of infant sprinklings -- namely, while he was moving toward the [re-]baptisms of antipaedobaptistic Semi-Montanism. Even then, however, it should not be thought that Tertullian totally abandoned infant baptism -- nor the truth of 'faith before baptism' (regardless of age). Still less should it be thought that Tertullian then repudiated sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism.<sup>271</sup>

Indeed, even during his schismatic days as a heterodox Semi-Montanist, Tertullian still grudgingly continued to regard infant baptism as valid -- and indeed as the established practice of the Universal Church from which he had temporarily seceded. Moreover, Tertullian himself even continued to advocate the questionable practice of emergency baptism even for infants -- and also for others -- if any such seemed to be dying.<sup>272</sup>

In his great work *Christian Baptism*, also Robert Ayres points out<sup>273</sup> that Tertullian's novel form of baptism by 'triple tinction' probably does not mean 'submersion.' It need not necessarily mean even 'immersion' -- and could well include sprinkling. Indeed, it could even consist exclusively of sprinkling. For in his *On Repentance*, Tertullian mentioned<sup>274</sup> "one single sprinkling of any water whatever" -- precisely when discussing baptism.

We ourselves think it probable that Tertullian did come to prefer innovated submersionism to Scriptural sprinkling -- especially after moving toward the heterodoxy of the antipaedobaptist and submersionizing Semi-Montanists (with their partly paganistic practices), and before later again moving back to the practice of the Church Universal. This would be so, particularly because during his middle phase Tertullian then mechanically -- if not magically -- maintained that the more water used in baptism, the more thoroughly it washed away sins. Of course, at the very end of his life (thus Augustine),<sup>275</sup> Tertullian did re-embrace the ancient views of the Universal Church -- apparently also those regarding the Biblical mode and subjects of baptism: *viz.* sprinkling and infants.

### **124. Tertullian on the proper subjects of baptism**

Let us now take a more detailed look at Tertullian's views on the proper subjects of baptism. In his early-date work called *Repentance*, composed perhaps in 192 A.D., the then-still-orthodox Tertullian was apparently thinking of Deuteronomy 32:2's words to the 'men and women and children' of Israel. There, God said through Moses: 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain. My speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.' Compare too Deuteronomy 29:29 & 31:12.

Tertullian commented<sup>276</sup> on this, that it "is chiefly urgent<sup>277</sup> in the case of those young novices who are only just beginning -- to 'be-dew' their ears with divine discourses...as whelps in yet early infancy and with...one single sprinkling." Nevertheless: "That baptismal washing is a sealing of faith -- which **faith** has begun.... We are **not** washed in order **that** we may escape

from sinning, but because we have ceased -- since in heart we have been bathed already.... So it is becoming [or it behooves] that **learners** desire baptism -- but do not hastily receive it."

In the last sentence, Tertullian seems to have advocated not so much the 'post-poning' of baptism -- but rather the 'pre-poning' of **faith** and repentance to a point preceding baptism. For here he was arguing that "we have been washed" -- since in heart, we have been bathed already.<sup>278</sup>

Even after making full allowances for the colourfulness of this language, it is still very difficult indeed to exclude covenant babies from Tertullian's baptismal doctrine. For he is here talking about Christian "**whelps** in yet **early infancy**." Indeed, it is even more difficult to extract the notion of submersionism here. For Tertullian here says those infants were "be-dew"-ed alias baptized with "one single sprinkling."

### **125. Tertullian's classic treatise 'On Baptism'**

We now come to Tertullian's classic (though perhaps already somewhat semimontanizing) writing on this subject -- his *On Baptism*. He wrote that discourse against an antichristian pseudo-prophetess. She was "a viper of the Cainite heresy" -- who was "making it her first aim to destroy baptism."

That 'viper' was probably even opposed to baptism as such -- and certainly opposed to the baptizing of tiny babies alias the '**little fishes**' of Christians. However, precisely such "little fishes" -- explained Tertullian -- "after the example of our 'I-CH-TH-U-S' [or 'Big F-I-S-H'] Jesus Christ, are born in water.... The 'viper' (*sic*) "knew full well how to kill the 'little fishes' -- by taking them out of [or away from] the water."<sup>279</sup>

Tertullian next grounded the sacrament, historically, "in the Spirit of God Who hovered over [the waters] from the beginning." Indeed, He "would continue to linger over the waters 'of the baptized'" (or *intinctorum* alias the 'in-tinct-ed ones').<sup>280</sup>

This is evident -- even from the perverted paganistic practices which were, remotely, derived from this. For even the Pagans, "by carrying water around and sprinkling it, expiate...whole cities...and are 'baptized'" (*sic*) in that way.<sup>281</sup>

Continued Tertullian:<sup>282</sup> "After the waters of the deluge by which the old iniquity was purged -- after the 'baptism' so to say of the world -- a dove was the herald" which brought peace to the world of Noah's family baptized in the ark. Later, "the entire people [of Israel], as unconditionally free, escaped the violence of the Egyptian king -- by crossing over through water" at the Red Sea. There they were 'baptized' into Moses, and with the cloud.<sup>283</sup>

Even today, Tertullian rightly insisted, believers 'baptized' with the blood of Christ are saved -- even when not able to have received water baptism. For this 'baptism of blood' indeed "stands in lieu of the fontal bathing, when that has not been received."<sup>284</sup>

## **126. The crucial eighteenth chapter in Tertullian's treatise 'On Baptism'**

Especially the eighteenth chapter of Tertullian's work *On Baptism* warrants detailed attention. His main and proper thrust there, was "that **baptism is not rashly to be administered**.... 'Give not the holy thing to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before swine!'<sup>285</sup> [Matthew 7:6]." Significantly, this very verse is footnoted in the sacramentology also of the Calvinistic Puritans' *Westminster Confession of Faith* (29:8<sup>o</sup>).

However, in what then immediately followed, Tertullian also showed his increasing opposition to the apostolic practice of the Universal Church. Indeed, he now clearly discloses his increasing shift away from Historic Christian Paedobaptism -- and toward semi-paganizing Semimontanism and its antipaedobaptistic submersionism, and indeed even toward its incipient baptismal regenerationism.

Said Tertullian: "According to the...isposition and even age of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however, in the case of little children. For why is it necessary -- if [baptism itself] is not so necessary -- that the sponsors likewise should be thrust into danger, who both themselves, by reason of mortality, may fail to fulfil their promises, and may be disappointed by the development of an evil disposition in those for whom they stood?"

"The Lord does indeed say, 'Do not forbid them to come to Me!' [Matthew 19:14 & Mark 10:14 & Luke 18:16]. Let them 'come' while they are 'learning' -- while they are learning where to come! Let them become 'Christ-ians' [alias 'baptismally-anointed ones'] when they have become able to know Christ! Why does 'the innocent period of life' hasten to the 'remission of sins?' More caution will be exercised....

"For no less cause, must the unwedded also be deferred.... If any understand the weighty import of baptism -- they will fear its reception, more than its delay. Sound faith is secure in salvation. The Passover affords a more than usually solemn day for baptism.... However, every day is the Lord's; every hour, every time, is apt for baptism."

## **127. Doctrinal errors in chapter eighteen of Tertullian's 'On Baptism'**

Here, Tertullian esteemed these 'delayed baptisms' to be "preferable" to hasty baptisms -- even as regards adult baptisms, but especially in respect of infant baptisms. Why especially the latter? Because they involved 'sponsors' -- and Tertullian reprehended that "the sponsors likewise should be thrust into danger."

Observe that Tertullian did not here attribute "danger" to infant Christians, nor to older Christians, for themselves remaining unbaptized. Rather did he attribute danger to adults getting themselves baptized too hastily -- and also to "sponsors" in getting infants baptized too hastily.

For Tertullian rightly believed that unbaptized infant Christians and unbaptized adult Christians were relatively safe already. He had just said, two chapters earlier, that the so-called

'baptism of blood' in respect of unbaptized believers -- "stands in lieu of the fontal bathing [alias water baptism] when that has not been received."

Tertullian now consistently and rightly went on to say: "baptism is not rashly to be administered" -- and: "Give not the holy things to the dogs!" Cf. Matthew 7:6. Significantly, this is a text which also the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (29:8<sup>g</sup>) applies against lax admission to the Sacrament.

Accordingly, "the delay of baptism is preferable -- principally...in the case of little children.... [For baptism itself] is not so necessary.... Why is it necessary...that the sponsors...should be thrust into danger?" Indeed it is not, said Tertullian -- and say we too.

Continued Tertullian: "Why does the innocent period of life hasten to the 'remission of sins?'" Such haste is unnecessary -- for the 'innocent' infant is already safe before baptism, and baptism itself is never that essential.

"If any understand the weighty import of baptism, they will fear its reception more than its delay." For the real danger of hasty baptism -- of either infants or adults -- is much greater than the alleged 'danger' of delaying such baptisms. Meantime, if through the 'delay' a faithful infant or a faithful adult should die without ever being baptized -- no harm has been done. For "sound faith is secure in salvation."

### **128. Tertullian's error of delaying infant baptism till later**

We still need to add that there is nevertheless at least one glaring error in this eighteenth chapter. For there, Tertullian also said that "the delay of baptism is preferable principally...in the case of little children" -- even though Tertullian himself also admits that "the Lord does indeed say in respect of infants too: 'Forbid them not to come unto Me!'" Matthew 18:2-14.

Here, Tertullian rightly connected the latter injunction to infant baptism. He also rightly insisted that infant baptisms should be delayed -- whenever the sponsors were in danger of wanting that baptism administered overhastily. In such cases, Tertullian soon went on to say -- rather recatechize those sponsors, and postpone the infant baptism till the "solemn day" of the next annual Passover-time!

However, Tertullian did seem to plead that this delay should be extended 'overlongly' -- even until the infants "are growing up." Tertullian here rightly admitted the infallible Christ Himself had said 'forbid them not to come unto Me' -- even while they were yet infants. Yet the fallible Tertullian then went on to say -- against Christ? -- that it is better such infants not so come to their Saviour, until that "are growing up."

Moreover, the fallible Tertullian's false statement here about covenant infants needing later to 'become Christians when they have become able to know Christ' -- is quite irreconcilable with the words of the infallible Christ Himself. For that matter, they are also quite irreconcilable with the correct statements Tertullian himself made elsewhere -- about covenant infants being 'holy' at conception, and being sentient even before birth. As the *Westminster Assembly's Directory for*

*the Publick Worship of God* insists, the "seed" also the infant children of "believers" are themselves "**Christians** and federally holy before baptism and therefore are to be baptized" etc.

Also the famous Anglican baptismal scholar Rev. Dr. Wall here rightly comments anent Tertullian: "It is a heedless answer that he makes to those words of our Saviour, 'Suffer little children to come to Me' &c -- when he says, 'Let them come when they are grown up when they understand' &c. For that seems to be the very thing that the disciples said, when they rebuked those that brought them -- for which rebuke our [Paedobaptist] Saviour blamed the [then antipaedobaptizing] disciples....

"Our Saviour would indeed have infants brought to Him in their infancy.... He declared the love of God to them, by His blessing and embracing them -- and saying 'Of such is the kingdom of God.' Which shews them to be capable of the covenant of mercy, and that infants are expressly admitted.... Deuteronomy 29:10 --'you, your little ones, &c -- and in the Old Testament had the [circumcisional] seal of the covenant."

### **129. Summary of Tertullian's baptismal treatise**

The following further points should carefully be noted. When they are, Tertullian is found to have been a lot more favourable toward infant baptism in general and the pre-baptismal faith of covenant infants in particular – than he is often perceived to have been.

First, the eighteenth chapter of Tertullian's work *On Baptism* is found in a treatise where he has been referring to baptisms by sprinkling. And, indeed, also to household baptism.

Second, the nineteen chapter's reference to Passover baptisms is significant. For it seems to indicate that the eighteenth chapter had been concerned chiefly not with the infant baptisms of the children of established Christian parents, but rather with the annual addition of adult Ex-Pagans to the Church each Easter.<sup>286</sup>

Third, Tertullian's recommendation that "the delay of baptism is preferable principally...in the case of little children" -- is merely his own personal preference against the undenied Universal Church's preference and practice of baptizing the infants even of converts from Paganism. However, Tertullian's caution would obtain even against the speedy baptism of the infants of long-time Christian adults or other ecclesiastically-recognized 'sponsors.' The latter would include: the Christian grandparents of their own orphaned grandchildren; Christian couples adopting children; or the Christian owners of penitent slaves and their slave-children.

Fourth, Tertullian's personal "preference" here indicated his mild discouraging of the already-established practice of infant baptism. That shows the latter was already paramount.

Fifth, Tertullian correctly assessed baptism was "not so necessary." This clearly indicates he was then not advocating 'baptismal regenerationism' as such.

Sixth, Tertullian's reference to the practice of using adult sponsors, wherever "baptism itself is not so necessary," indicated his own approval of 'emergency baptisms' deemed "necessary."

To him, the latter might well have included situations wherever adults or even infants were dying unbaptized -- and wherever 'sponsors' could not be obtained in time to be present at the 'necessary' baptism of dying infants. All of which again stresses infant baptism.

Seventh, Tertullian mentions of adult "sponsors" at infant baptisms. This indicates both infant baptism and sponsors at infant baptisms were already securely established. Tertullian's discouraging of both -- indicated that both were then being practised in the Church at large.

Eighth, even Tertullian applied the 'forbid them not' texts (of Matthew 19:14 & Mark 10:14 & Luke 18:16) to baptisms. Unintentionally, he thus linked the texts to infant baptism.

Ninthly, Tertullian rebuked those who at "the innocent period of life" fairly 'hasten' to receive baptism as the sign of the 'remission of sins.' This is obviously a reference to infants being hastened into the Church, to receive the very 'infant baptism' the Semi-Montanizing Tertullian was then opposing.

Tenth and last, Tertullian ascetically opposed the baptism even of unwedded adults. Possibly if not probably, this opposition too derived from Semi-Montanism. At any rate, it is just as unbiblical -- as is his wanting to delay the baptism of covenantal infants until "they are growing up."

### **130. Tertullian on the holiness of unborn covenant children**

In his later work *On the Soul*, Tertullian again dealt with our subject. We have already seen<sup>287</sup> that Tertullian in that treatise<sup>288</sup> made some truly excellent observations about the soul's consciousness and ability to believe even before birth.

In that same treatise, however, Tertullian also recognized the cogency for infant salvation of Paul's inspired statement in First Corinthians 7:14. We mean Paul's statement that the believing spouse sanctifies the unbelieving spouse in sexual intercourse within marriage, so that their resulting children are not 'unclean' but 'holy.'

Tertullian rightly recognized that all children are conceived in sin. Thus, they cannot be saved at all -- unless subsequently born again before they die (either during fetushood or thereafter).

For all the divine "endowments of the soul which are bestowed on it at generation, are still obscured and depraved by the malignant being [Satan]...ready to entrap their souls from the very portal of their birth -- at which he is invited to be present in all those superstitious processes which accompany childbearing" among the Pagans. "In no case -- I mean of the Heathen, of course -- is there any nativity which is pure from [or devoid of] idolatrous superstition."<sup>289</sup>

However, added Tertullian, "the apostle said that when either of the parents were sanctified, the children were holy [First Corinthians 7:14]; and this as much by the prerogative of the seed

(*ex seminis praerogativa*), as by the discipline of the institution (by baptism and Christian education). 'Else,' said he [Paul], 'were the children unclean'....

"He meant us to understand that the children of believers were designed for holiness, and thereby for salvation.... Besides, he had certainly not forgotten what the Lord had so definitively stated: 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God' [John 3:5] -- in other words, he cannot be holy.

"Every soul, then, by reason of its birth [or even conception], has its origin in Adam -- until it is born again in Christ. Moreover, it is unclean all the while that it remains without this regeneration." For "there is besides the evil which supervenes on the soul [of the paganistic child] from the intervention of the evil spirit, an antecedent...natural evil which arises from its corrupt origin" -- namely, 'original sin.'"

Indeed, as Dr. Wall points out in his great work on *The History of Infant Baptism*, Tertullian here "expounds the holiness that such children have by the prerogative of their birth -- by these words: *sanctitati designati* ('designated for holiness')."290

### **131. Tertullian believed that infants could have faith**

In his *On the Soul*, Tertullian said<sup>291</sup> that infants could believe in Christ. "The infancy...of a human being...may be compared with the nascent sprout of a tree [*cf.* Romans 11:16].... His infant cries...testify to his actual possession of the faculties of sensation and intellect.... The babe **knows** his mother; discerns the nurse; and even recognizes the waiting-maid.... It would be very strange indeed that infancy were naturally so lively -- if it had not mental power."

Indeed, if "the baby knows his **mother**" -- how much easier for the baby to **know** his or her **heavenly Father** and His Son through the Holy Spirit! For there is indeed, even prenatally, a Saviour Friend Who "keeps on sticking closer than a brother." Proverbs 17:17 & 18:24 *cf.* Psalm 139:13*f.* Maintained Tertullian somewhat unbelievably: "In the district of Colythus, children [even] speak -- such is the precocity of their tongue -- before they are a month old."<sup>292</sup>

Here, the following can nevertheless clearly be seen. Each one of these points should clearly be noted.

First. Tertullian regarded all infants since the fall as being conceived in sin and not 'pure' -- unless and until 'born again.'

Second. Paganistic children are regarded as conceived and born in 'idolatrous' uncleanness.

Third. Covenant children born of at least one believing parent are 'holy' -- and therefore themselves to be regarded as Christians even at their birth.

Fourth. Such covenant children are holy 'by the prerogative of Christian seed' or 'because of their descent from a Christian parent.'

Fifth. Because those covenant children are 'holy' by descent from a Christian parent -- they are not incipiently made holy by their subsequent baptism.

Sixth. Such 'holy' children are intended for infant baptism (as the seal of their presumably already-present incipient faith). They are also intended for a post-baptismal Christian education or 'the discipline of the institution' -- alias the development of the child's faith already seminally present before his or her infant baptism.

Seventh. Were it not for their descent from a Christian parent, such children would be 'unclean' (whether baptized or not).

Eighth. As the babies of believers, they are covenant children -- and therefore 'designed for holiness and thereby for salvation.'

Ninth. Already before their baptisms such covenant children are deemed to have been 'born again' -- without which latter they could not be Christians and 'cannot be holy.'

Tenth. As those deemed to have been 'born again' already -- such covenant children are clearly baptizable, after and because of and in addition to their prebaptismal and even prenatal 'holiness.' First Corinthians 7:14 *cf.* Mark 16:16. Because they had been 'designed for holiness' at conception, they were so sealed at their baptism -- and were so to be promoted subsequently.

Eleventh. All at conception inherit the guilt of Adam's sin "until...born again in Christ" -- or until "entered onto Christ's list."<sup>293</sup>

And twelfth. Every such (unregenerate) child remains "unclean all the while he or she remains without this regeneration." That is so, because of the prenatal 'antecedent' and 'evil which arises from its corrupt origin' (namely at conception, *cf.* Psalm 51:5).

Last, in this regard the remarks of the famous Anglican Rev. Dr. Wall in his celebrated volumes on *The History of Infant Baptism* are highly significant. Erroneously, Wall himself believed covenant babies are cleansed precisely during their infant baptism. Yet anent First Corinthians 7:14, even he was forced to admit<sup>294</sup> "that Tertullian...expounds the holiness that such children have by the prerogative of their birth" -- rather than by their subsequent baptisms.

### **132. Aland-Jeremias-Argyle: Tertullian on Early-Patristic baptismal practice**

As even the maverick Lutheran Aland rightly points out,<sup>295</sup> according to Tertullian: "When born a Pagan, this sin clings to a man..., and in particular pagan[istic] superstition.... Where a man has Christian parents, or even only one, this danger does not exist. For he is born -- a *sanctus* [alias as one who has finished being made holy].... Christian children...are to be regarded as *sancti* 'when either of the parents was sanctified'; and, in truth, they are actually born as such." Coming from even an offbeat Lutheran like Aland, this is an amazing admission.<sup>296</sup>

Aland further states,<sup>297</sup> though somewhat erroneously: "The New Testament undoubtedly makes statements about the character and significance of baptism for the Christian. But it makes



these statements without providing any binding prescription as to the manner in which it is to be carried out, and in particular without any clearly-binding directions concerning the time of its administration.

"In the Acts of the Apostles, and occasionally elsewhere, we are able to glimpse a few aspects of early Christian usage. From them, we must conclude that infant baptism was not practised at that time, since these infants were regarded as *hagia*" alias 'holy ones' -- even while yet unbaptized. "The early Church perpetuates this tradition, and only at the end of the second century departed from it."

"As shown in one of our previous paragraphs, Aland here erred grievously. Yet he also adds elsewhere<sup>298</sup> (and this time rightly so): "We know that *circa* A.D. 200, there were circles in Carthage desiring infant baptism. About 220, the *Church Order* of Hippolytus in Rome included little children in the baptismal order...."

"About 230, Origen -- in Palestine -- characterized it as the 'custom of the Church'.... And about 250, it was the rule demanded by the bishops in North Africa.... There is no doubting that infant baptism took place between 230 and 250 in Palestine...'according to the custom of the Church.' It need not be doubted that the usage in that place is older."<sup>299</sup>

The orthodox Lutheran Rev. Prof. Dr. Joachim Jeremias demonstrates conclusively<sup>300</sup> that "neither Tertullian nor Origen nor Cyprian give us the slightest support for the hypothesis that infant baptism was an innovation in their time." Indeed, even the Baptist Argyle had made similar concessions.

The **Baptist Argyle** explains<sup>301</sup> that Origen describes "the practice of infant baptism not only as a custom of the church, but as an apostolic custom." Indeed, "Cyprian Bishop of Carthage, a contemporary of Origen, directs that infants should be baptized."

These Lutheran and Baptist opponents of the Calvinistic concept (of the holiness of covenant children from conception onward), all concede that the extant Post-Tertullianic evidence overwhelmingly shows that the Early Church indeed upheld the federal holiness of covenant children -- and accordingly baptized them in infancy. So, we can now proceed more rapidly -- while next presenting the Post-Tertullianic evidence supporting our viewpoint.

### **133. Schaff's summary of paedobaptistic practice before 200 A.D.**

Before we do so, however, we first wish to endorse Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff's summary of the views of the Early Church Fathers on this subject. Declares Schaff:<sup>302</sup> "Pious parents would naturally feel a desire to consecrate their offspring from the very beginning to the service of the Redeemer, and find a precedent in the ordinance of circumcision...."

"Justin Martyr expressly teaches the capacity of all men for spiritual circumcision by baptism; and his 'all' can with the less propriety be limited -- since he is here speaking to a Jew [*Dialogue with Trypho* ch. 43]. He also says that many old men and women of sixty and seventy years of age have been from childhood disciples of Christ [*First Apology* ch. 15]."

"Polycarp was eighty-six years a Christian, and must have been baptized in early youth. According to Irenaeus, his pupil and a faithful bearer of Johannean tradition, Christ passed through all the stages of life to sanctify them all, and came to redeem through Himself 'all who through Him are **born again** unto God -- sucklings, children, boys, youths, and adults' [*Against Heresies* II:22:4]....

"Among the fathers, Tertullian himself not excepted -- for he combats only its expediency -- there is not a single voice against the lawfulness and the apostolic origin of infant baptism. No time can be fixed at which it was first introduced. Tertullian suggests that it was usually based on the invitation of Christ: 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not'.... Heretics also practised it -- and were not censured for it" by the Church Universal.

### **134. Hippolytus: the little ones in Christian families are to be baptized**

Hippolytus of Rome, the Church Overseer of Portus, was a disciple of Irenaeus.<sup>303</sup> Around 215 A.D., he compiled his *Apostolic Traditions*. This seems to have drawn from the older *Egyptian Church Order*.<sup>304</sup> Hippolytus himself may well have authored the latter. Even if not, he at any rate certainly incorporated it into the second part of his book: *Concerning the Apostolic Tradition of Gifts of Grace*.<sup>305</sup>

Hippolytus clearly linked Christian baptism to Judaic proselyte baptism. He directed:<sup>306</sup> "First you should baptize the little ones. All who can speak for themselves, should speak. But for those who cannot speak, their parents should speak -- or another who belongs to their family."

Thus, Hippolytus accepted household baptism -- including that of covenant infants -- as an unquestioned rule. This had probably been transmitted to Hippolytus by his teacher Irenaeus -- who had received it from his mentor Polycarp, who had himself in turn absorbed it from his teacher the apostle John. Certainly Hippolytus's statement on household baptism was transmitted from the Coptic into the Latin, and also into the most diverse oriental languages. It thenceforth served as a foundation for numerous subsequent Church Ordinances normative for the administration of baptism in the Church Universal.

The skeptical Aland has attempted to argue<sup>307</sup> that the previously-mentioned passage<sup>308</sup> in the *Apostolic Traditions* represents a Post-Hippolytan interpolation. However, the remarkable agreement shown by the Ethiopic, Arabic and Syriac translations of this passage -- certainly favours its Hippolytan if not even its Pre-Hippolytan antiquity. In fact, the first word in the title *Apostolic Tradition* -- rather evidences even an apostolic practice long before Hippolytus.

Very much more significant yet is the fact that it became the principal source, and often part, of many subsequent books on Common law throughout the Christian world -- in Latin, Greek, Syriac, Sahidic *etc.* All of these, without exception, reflect the unbroken custom of baptizing infants.<sup>309</sup>

### **135. Origen: infant baptism is an apostolic tradition**

Origen, the highly allegorical student of Clement of Alexandria, succeeded his mentor as head of the Catechetical School there -- round about 225 A.D. Eusebius tells us<sup>310</sup> Origen's ancestors had been Christian "from his forefathers" for several generations (*ek progonōn*). Indeed, Rufinus remarks<sup>311</sup> that Origen inherited his Christianity "from his grandparents and forefathers (*ab avis atque atavis*)."

Observes Dr. Wall: "Origen was born *anno* 185. That is, 'the year after the apostles 85' [John having passed away around A.D. 100]." Origen, continued Wall, "was seventeen years old when his father suffered." Consequently, "his grandfather, or at least his great-grandfather, must have lived in the apostles' time...."

"He could not have been ignorant [of] whether he was himself baptized in infancy.... He had no further than his own family to go, for inquiry of how it [infant baptism] was practised in the time of the apostles...."

"He was...a very learned man, and could not be ignorant of the use of the churches in most of which he had also travelled.... He was born and bred at Alexandria.... He had lived in Greece and at Rome and in Cappadocia and Arabia -- and spent the main part of his life in Syria and Palestine." See Eusebius's *Church History* VI.

It is clear that Origen himself was baptized -- apparently in infancy -- and probably in Egypt around 185 A.D. When an adult, he still clung to infant baptism -- being largely orthodox in his doctrine of the universal imputation of Adam's original sin.

Thus, in his *Eighth Homily on Leviticus* chapter four, and referring further to Psalm 51:5f, Origen argued that "every soul that is born in the flesh is polluted with the filth of sin and iniquity.... None is clean from pollution, though his life be but of the length of one day.... The baptism of the church is given for forgiveness of sins. Infants also are, by the usage of the church, baptized."

Similarly, in his *Homily on Luke* chapter fourteen, Origen remarked: "Infants are baptized.... None is free from pollution, though his life be but of the length of one day upon the earth.... Infants are baptized!"

Rev. Professor Dr. Schaff declares:<sup>312</sup> "In the churches of Egypt, infant baptism must have been practised from the first.... Origen distinctly derives it from the tradition of the apostles.... Through his journeys in the East and West, he was well acquainted with the practice of the Church in his time...."

"Origen himself was baptized in childhood (185 or soon after)...in connection with the Egyptian custom.... It would certainly be more difficult to prove that he was not baptized in infancy.... Compare his *Commentary on Matthew*..., where he seems to infer this custom from the example of Christ blessing little children."<sup>313</sup>

### **136. Origen on infant faith and infant baptism: continued**

On Matthew 18:2-14, Origen commented that Jesus is here referring also to those who are infants in age. Origen then asked three questions. **When** is it that the angels here spoken of, are set over those little ones shewed by our Saviour? **Whether** they [those little ones] take the care and management of them [the angels] from the time when they by the washing of regeneration...as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word and are no longer subject to any evil power? Or from their **birth**, according to the foreknowledge of God and His predestinating of them?"

Such a little child as our Saviour then set before the apostles, had his 'guardian angel' given to him by God before his infant baptism -- viz. from the time of his birth, and even from his prenatal conception onward. Origen says that the guardian angel is given to every one from his birth. Jeremiah (1:5) says God sanctified him before he came forth out of the womb. Matthew (18:6) says of Jesus that there are "little ones that believe in Him" -- even before their baptism.

Most of Origen's vast writings were lost, but some have been preserved especially in those of Jerome and Rufinus. Thus we still have Origen's comment on Matthew 19:28, where Jesus speaks of those who have followed Him in the regeneration.

Commented Origen: "That is a regeneration...when a new heaven and a new earth are made.... But the way to that regeneration, is that which by Paul is called the laver of regeneration.... There is perhaps in our generation none clean from pollution, though his life be but of one day.... All that are born, may say that which was said by David in the...[fifth-first] psalm. That was this -- 'I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' But in the regeneration..., everyone that is born again of water and Spirit is clean from pollution."

Not less than forty times did Origen, in the remnants of his Greek works, cite the Septuagint's Job 14:5 -- that 'none is free from pollution, though his life be but of one day.' Indeed, this statement is also cited both there and elsewhere -- in the translations of Jerome and Rufinus from Origen.

It is said in those translations: "This natural pollution of sin must be done away by water and the Spirit." Consequently, also infants one day old need the regeneration (of which infant baptism is the sign and seal). For Origen knew that about half of those then being born into the world, must get regenerated during infancy -- if ever at all. For he knew that half the human race then alive, was never reaching adulthood.

Indeed, Origen himself maintained<sup>314</sup> that Elijah had 'baptized' the twelve stones of the altar, representing the twelve tribes of Israel and their infant children, when he had proceeded thrice to "pour" water over those stones. Similarly, so too John the baptizer as a 'Second Elijah' had sprinkled the penitent Israelites and their infants. See: First Kings 18:33f; Malachi 3:1-4; 4:5-6; John 1:25; Matthew 17:3-13.

### **137. Origen on infant faith and infant baptism: concluded**

Origen held<sup>315</sup> (anent Romans 6:5f) that "the Church received from the apostles the tradition of baptizing infants too." Elsewhere he stated<sup>316</sup> (on Luke 2:22a) that "children also are baptized for the remission of sins.... That is the reason why infants too are baptized." Indeed, yet elsewhere he maintained<sup>317</sup> (on Leviticus 12:2) that baptism is given "according to the custom of the Church to infants also."

In these three last-mentioned places (Romans and Luke and Leviticus), Origen cites<sup>318</sup> the Septuagint's version of Job 14:4f as a prooftext: "No one is pure from stain, yea, though he be but one day old." In all three of these passages, either the Greek *paidia* ('little children') or the Latin *parvuli* ('small children') occurs.

For "a child who has only just been born..., has sin..., as...Psalm 51:5-7 shows.... The Church received from the apostles the tradition to administer baptism to the children also.... Infants are baptized for the remission of sins.... That is...why infants too are baptized."<sup>319</sup>

Significantly, Origen called baptism: "regeneration to God."<sup>320</sup> Yet he repudiated any notion that this might have occurred *ex opere operato* -- where he said the insincere are baptized unto condemnation.<sup>321</sup> Some believers, said Origen, "are called from childhood and the earliest age of life." Indeed, these are they who are "faithful from childhood."<sup>322</sup>

In his *Homilies on Joshua*, Origen implied that even the infants of Israel were 'baptized' at the Jordan -- and without submersion. For "at the Jordan, the ark of the Testament was the leader of the people of God.... The *waters* curbed their stream, and piled up...and gave a safe passage.... These things...refer to...you, Christian, who has crossed the Jordan stream -- through the sacrament of baptism."

Still commenting on Joshua 3:8-17 and 4:1-22, where the children of Israel were all 'baptized' at the Jordan on dry land, Origen in that very connection next referred to Matthew 18:10. Maintained Origen: "According to that saying of our Lord concerning infants -- and you were an infant when you were baptized -- 'their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven.' So then, Jesus wrote His Law in your heart in the presence of those children of Israel beholding God's face, at the time when the sacrament of faith was given to you!"<sup>323</sup>

Origen himself thus certainly claimed that, since the time of the apostles, baptism had always been given to infants. Also the knowledgeable Jerome claimed this about Origen.

He unfortunately also went far beyond infant baptism. Syncretizing the Bible (probably unconsciously) with Hellenistic and perhaps also Egyptian Paganism, Origen developed an incipient theory of baptismal regenerationism. Indeed, he also used it to help construct his own neopaganizing hypothesis anent the pre-existence of the soul even before conception.

Nevertheless, Origen's words do at least clearly evidence the widespread practice of Paedobaptism in his own day. His words do lend credibility to his claim that infant baptism was certainly an apostolic practice. Indeed, there is even evidence that Origen's student Basilides

received "the seal" of baptism not at all by way of submersion -- but by way of pouring or sprinkling from a "small jar of water."<sup>324</sup>

### **138. Cyprian of Carthage: newborn infants of believers should be baptized**

Cyprian, a rather ritualistic student of Tertullian, was born of respectable yet heathen parents around 200 A.D. He seems to have lived a rather worldly life -- until converted and baptized [as an adult] in 246.

In 248, Cyprian became a Church Overseer -- which Tertullian had never become. Cyprian was certainly influenced by his fellow Carthaginian Tertullian in many ways -- and even baptismally. Yet it seems very significant that also Cyprian nevertheless argued strongly in favour of both the existing practice as well as the normative rightness of household and infant baptism.

It was, of course, on the eighth day after birth that covenant infants had been circumcised -- prior to Christ's resurrection on the 'eighth day of the week' to fulfil and to replace circumcision. Genesis 17:8-16; John 20:1,19,26; Colossians 2:11-13. Thus, Cyprian stated that the earlier (251 or 253 A.D.) Synod of Carthage had unanimously and rightly recognized the validity of such infant baptisms as were administered even before the eighth day after birth.

Explained Cyprian<sup>325</sup> as to "the case of infants..., 'the Son of man has not come to destroy...but to save them.' As far as we can, we must strive that -- if possible -- no soul be lost. For what is lacking to him who has once been formed in the womb by the hands of God?"

Cyprian continued: "Among all, whether infants or those who are older, there is the same equality of the divine gift.... That very grace also which is given to the baptized, is given either less or more -- according to the age of the receivers.... God, as He does not accept the person, so does not accept the age -- since He shows Himself a Father to all, with well-weighed equality for the attainment of heavenly grace....

"Although the infant is still fresh from its birth, yet it is not such that any one should shudder.... For in respect of the observance of the eighth day in the Jewish circumcision of the flesh, a sacrament was given beforehand in shadow and in usage. But when Christ came, it was fulfilled in truth.... Because the eighth day (the first day after the Sabbath) was to be that on which the Lord should rise again -- and should quicken us and give us circumcision of the Spirit.

"The eighth day and the Lord's day -- that is, the first day after the Sabbath -- went before in the figure. That figure ceased -- when by and by, the truth came and spiritual circumcision was given to us.... Peter also, in the Acts of the Apostles [10:28], speaks and says 'The Lord has said to me that I should call no man common or unclean'.... Nobody is hindered...from baptism and from grace.

"How much rather ought we to shrink from hindering an infant who, being lately born, has not sinned -- except in that being born after the flesh according to Adam, he has contracted the

contagion of the ancient death at its earliest birth.... To him are remitted not his own sins, but the sins of another....

"This was our opinion in the Council... By us no one ought to be hindered from baptism...which (since it is to be observed and maintained in respect of all) -- we think is to be even more observed in respect of infants and newly-born persons."

Significantly, in his own writings *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* (IV:8), Augustine of Hippo later cites this Cyprianic passage. He then adds "about the baptizing of infants" that "there is no doubt but that it is to be had at Carthage." So too in his *Epistle to Boniface* (98:3f). And so too Jerome (in Book III of his own *Dialogue Against the Pelagians*).

### **139. Cyprian: baptism should be administered by way of sprinkling**

Cyprian's commitment to infant and household baptism and indeed to the mode of sprinkling, can also be seen elsewhere. Thus, there is his further statement<sup>326</sup> that "the Jews under the apostles...had already gained the most ancient baptism of the Law and Moses." Numbers 8:5-7 & 19:8-13 *cf.* Hebrews 9:10-21.

Even more strikingly, Cyprian wrote to Demetrianus about Ezekiel 9:4-6. There the executioners of God's wrath were commanded to "slay all -- old and young, maids and little children -- that had not the mark upon their foreheads."

Cyprian then applied this to *Christians*, saying it signifies that none can now escape but those only who are "regenerated -- and signed with Christ's mark." See too Matthew 28:19 *cf.* Revelation 7:2-4 & 9:4 & 14:1 & 22:2-4.

There was also the important controversy surrounding the re-admission or non-readmission (and thus the re-baptism or non-rebaptism) of former members who had 'lapsed' from the Universal Christian Church during the time of the Decian persecutions. All of the various parties involved in that controversy, unanimously insisted on the rightness of baptism by the method of sprinkling. This was true: of the compromised Lapsists; of the unreadmitting Novatianists; of the anti-rebaptist Stephenites; and also of the Cyprianists (who demanded rebaptism for all those even trinitarianly baptized by either the Montanists or the Novatianists).

It was the Antirebaptists who finally emerged victorious in this controversy. They rightly insisted on the rightness of baptism by the method of sprinkling -- seeing the 'baptized' disciples were not submersed but "effused"<sup>327</sup> on the day of Pentecost.

Also the stern and overstrict Novatianists knew of no other method of baptism than by sprinkling. Indeed, the gravely-ill Novatian himself had previously received a 'Tertullianistic emergency baptism' by "being perfused in the bed where he lay."<sup>328</sup>

With this, one should compare Walafrid Strabo's later baptismal statement about Cyprian's contemporary Laurence.<sup>329</sup> We mean his statement that "one of the soldiers..., being converted,

brought a pitcher of water for Laurence to baptize him with" -- just before Laurence himself was martyred about the same time as Cyprian, in 258 A.D.

#### **140. Other evidence in Cyprian for baptismal sprinkling**

Cyprian himself remarked that those who had been sprinkled baptismally, at least in the Universal Church, should not be rebaptized wheresoever -- by any mode whatsoever.<sup>330</sup> There, Cyprian discussed those previously baptized by being "sprinkled."

If they had been "sprinkled" in the Universal Church, continued Cyprian, their own "diffidence and modesty prejudices none.... Holy Scripture speaks by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel [36:25-26] and says, 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean'....

"Also in Numbers [19:8-13], ' And the man that shall be unclean...shall be cut off from Israel' because the water of sprinkling has not been sprinkled upon him.' And again [Numbers 8:5-7]..., 'You shall sprinkle them with the water of purification.' And again [Numbers 19:9], 'The water of sprinkling is a purification.' Thence -- it appears that the sprinkling [alias *adspersionem*] of water prevails....

"If any think that those have gained nothing by having only been sprinkled with the saving water, but that they are still empty and void -- let them not be deceived!... Nay, verily, the Holy Spirit is not given by measure, but is poured out [alias *infunditur*] altogether upon [alias *super*] the believer." Cf. Acts 1:5f & 2:1-4,14-21.

According to Cyprian, it wrongly "seems just to some -- that those who outside the Church...are polluted with profane water [in 'heretical baptisms'], should be judged to be baptized." Consequently, "they who come [into the Universal Church] from heresy -- shall not be asked whether they were washed [alias *loti*] or sprinkled [alias *perfusi*]."

Yet, when describing baptisms performed by the Universal Church herself -- Cyprian never used the word *mergo* and much less the words *immergo* and *submergo*. Instead, he used only words like *baptizo* (usually) -- and occasionally *adspersi* [alias 'sprinkled'], *infunditur* [alias 'poured out'], and *perfusi* [alias 'poured'] *etc.* Indeed, Cyprian's contemporary -- Dionysius the Church Overseer of Alexandria -- speaks of baptism specifically as a threefold sprinkling.<sup>331</sup>

#### **141. Syncretistic Cyprian: the father of baptismal regenerationism**

Already from the above, a syncretism can be observed between non-regenerating infant baptism by Scriptural sprinkling on the one hand -- and 'magical' paganistic washings *ex opere operato* on the other. Indeed, it was especially the 250 A.D. Catabaptist Cyprian who introduced the swiftly-spreading and paganistic pollution called 'baptismal regenerationism' -- into the Early Church Universal. Yet even subsequently, resistance against it still continued -- for more than a century thereafter.



We hardly ever agree with Dr. Samuel Angus, sometime Professor of New Testament and Historical Theology at St. Andrew's College, University of Sydney. He was greatly in error -- also when he attributed New Testament Christianity to Pagan Greek roots.

Yet what Angus claimed about the Late-Patristic Church, is true. For it is undeniable that the form-ed Church at length became increasingly de-formed. This occurred especially from the (250 A.D.) time of Cyprian onward. It continued until the Church re-formed -- in the days of the 1517<sup>f</sup> Protestant Re-form-ation.

Wrote Angus:<sup>332</sup> "It was inevitable that [heathen] Hellenic religion should leave a deep impression upon...later Christianity..., mainly because Hellenic converts became the pillars of the Church.... In considering the history of Christian sacramentarianism..., the organization of the Catholic Church was largely the creation of the genius of Cyprian, who was a firm believer in magic....

"In several of the [Pagan] Mystery-Religions, 'baptism' was the means to the remission of the penalties of sin and of regeneration.... The 'baptism' of the *taurobolium* [alias being showered with bull's blood], was valid for twenty years."

Unintended corroboration of the above, comes also from the camp of Traditionalistic Romanism. Thus Dr. B. V. Miller, Oscott Professor of Dogmatic Theology at St. Mary's College.

According to Miller:<sup>333</sup> "All competent scholars are agreed that from the end of the third century, the Catholic theology of the Mass was fixed.... It is maintained by many that this is a perversion of the primitive doctrine.... The principal author of the innovation and of the change in the current of theological tradition, is said to be St. Cyprian."

Let it never be forgotten that Cyprian, though an Early-Catholic Christian, was also a heterodox Catabaptist! For Cyprian deviated from mainline Christianity [and even from Early-Catholicism] at that time -- with his insistence upon rebaptizing all those catholicized even from trinitarian sects. This rebaptistic viewpoint was essentially magical and ritualistic.

Fortunately, it was then successfully opposed -- in the middle of the third century -- by Stephen of Rome and by Dionysius of Rome. Yet it did introduce a permanent element of superstition -- which soon spread throughout the Early-Catholic Church. It poisoned her for many centuries, and indeed right down till the Protestant Reformation.

#### **142. Baptismal inscriptions for infants (dating from 200 to 300 A.D.)**

In looking at some ancient inscriptions from Italy and France (alias Gaul) -- dating from A.D. 200 to 300 -- it can be seen that they too favour infant and household baptism, and indeed specifically by sprinkling. (Perhaps because of overly-strict understandings of the First and Second Commandments of the Decalogue especially among the earlier Christians, there are no extant Christian drawings or even inscriptions -- on any subject whatsoever -- before 200 A.D.)

A tombstone inscription of approximately 200 A.D., however, reads:<sup>334</sup> "Zosimus, a believer [descended] from believers (*pistos ek pistōn*), lies here; having lived 2 years, 1 month, 25 days." Another such tombstone states of the "innocent infant" Dionysius, that "he lies here with the **holy** ones." Yet another gravestone suggests that the covenant child Eutychnianus had been baptized, **before** dying when only one year old.

Similarly, the "holy infant" Kyriakos is styled a "slave of Christ" -- on his tombstone. Further, another tombstone mentions the "baptism" of a tiny child addressed as "the sweetest one born." Again, the grave of the two-year-old Pomponia Fortunata is marked with the Christian symbol of the fish -- and claims that she "died in peace." And another tombstone inscription states that "by the Holy Spirit, Innocent lived about three years."

Yet other third-century tombstones suggest: that Sabus had been baptized, before dying when not yet one; that Theodora died, baptized, when 11 months old; that Alexandria also did so, when two; and that the "worthy...believer" Apronius was baptized at the request of his godly grandmother -- before he died after living one year and nine months and five days.

Further, there is the case of Tyche, who was baptized before he died when only one year ten months and fifteen days old. Irene was baptized one week before she died, after living with her parents for eleven months. And three different Greek Christian boys, who all died when twelve years old, are stated to have been "born believers" (or *pistoi genetēi*) -- as faithful covenant children of three different pairs of Christian parents.

From Africa, there are third-century inscriptions indicating that two children were baptized before they died when respectively nine hours and six days old. And the adult martyr Crispina said when dying, that God Who commanded her to be born -- had also given her **salvation** and baptism at the time of her birth.<sup>335</sup>

### **143. The baptismal errors of second- and third-century Sub-Christians**

We have already seen that the dispensationalistic Marcionites wrongly taught the repeatability of baptism. Possibly Simon the magician and probably the heretic Menander 'baptized' not in the Name of God Triune nor even Jesus but in their own name. The Carpocratians quite literally put their own 'ear-mark' on their converts. And the Valentinians poured a mixture of oil and water over the heads of their proselytes (thus anticipating the practice of mediaeval Romanists).

The Cerinthians (like the modern Mormons) 'baptized' for the dead. So too did the Montanists -- who also first rebaptized their converts, and then abandoned infant baptism. Several sects would not baptize married people, and insisted on divorce first. Even within the Church Universal, for a short time, the Firmilianists and the Cyprianists wrongly rebaptized converted sectarians who had been baptized previously elsewhere in the Name of God Triune.

Of all these groups, none are known to have denied infant salvation. Not until the Hieracitae in 285f A.D., do we encounter that heresy.

According to Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff,<sup>336</sup> the heretic "Hieracas or Hierax of Leontopolis in Egypt...lived during the Diocletian persecution." That occurred on and off from 284 to 303 A.D. Schaff further claims that Hieracas "declared virginity a condition of salvation." Later, Epiphanius [*circa* 315-403 A.D.] described him as a man...who...denied the...salvation of children."

It is not known whether or not this Hieracas and his followers ever abandoned infant baptism. In his own work *The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation*,<sup>337</sup> Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield describes especially the followers of Hieracas. Warfield explains that "a heretical sect arose called the *Hieracitae*..., consigning apparently all children dying before the use of reason -- to annihilation. See Epiphanius's *Heresies* 67 and Augustine's *Heresies* 47."

As 'Neo-Hieracianism' -- this heresy of Hieracas later re-emerged among the mediaeval Petrobusians (A.D. 1105f). They denied both infant salvation and infant baptism. Thus even the Baptist A.H. Newman, in his *History of Antipaedobaptism*.<sup>338</sup>

For the rest, the evidence of Early Church History is quite clear. The Church Universal always presupposed the salvation of early-dying covenant children, and accordingly baptized during their infancy such covenant babies as looked likely to continue to live here on Earth. There is no evidence at all that any early Sub-Christian sect rebaptized infants if and after they became adults. Such is not found until the second-generation Montanists, at the beginning of the third century.

Even the Semimontanist Tertullian II, while indeed favouring the postponement of baptism till adulthood, did not deny the Christic and apostolic antiquity of infant baptism. Nor did he ever advocate the rebaptism in adulthood of those previously baptized when infants.

Not till the Hieracitae at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century -- do we encounter the viewpoint that infants as such cannot be saved. Indeed, it is not till the twelfth century heretical Petrobusians that we find a wholesale abandonment of infant baptism -- coupled with their apostate Neo-Hieracianistic denial of infant salvation.

#### **144. Baptisms of young believers in early-fourth-century writings**

Around 300 A.D., Eusebius the Church Overseer of Caesarea informs us that even Novatian received baptism by effusion. He also records that God in Old Testament times provided "fountains facing the temple...for those who required the purification and the sprinklings of water and the Holy Spirit." Indeed, he also tells us Basilides was baptized in prison -- thus suggesting sprinkling.<sup>339</sup>

Similarly, Lactantius wrote<sup>340</sup> that "Jesus was baptized by John at the river Jordan." This was done, "so that He might wash away by the spiritual laver the sins not of Himself...but of the...Pagans also -- by baptism, that is, by the sprinkling of the dew of purification."

The Synod of Elvira (in 306 A.D.) referred<sup>341</sup> to infants as Church Members by baptism. Alexander, the Church Overseer of Alexandria, baptized by sprinking or pouring; and his

successor, the great Athanasius, regarded baptism by affusion as the true Christian mode. Indeed, Athanasius cited Genesis 7:11f and Leviticus 24:4-9 and First Corinthians 10:1f -- and reflected on the relationship between **baptism**, rain, clouds, the sprinkled waters of purification, and tears.<sup>342</sup>

The 316 Synod of Neocaesarea seemed to imply that the prenatal tiny boy of a pregnant woman herself baptized during pregnancy -- should himself be baptized postnatally, during his infancy. Thus: Rivetus,<sup>343</sup> Wall,<sup>344</sup> Balsamon,<sup>345</sup> Zonarus,<sup>346</sup> and Augustine<sup>347</sup> -- *versus* the antipaedobaptizing Arminian Hugo Grotius.<sup>348</sup>

Also the (320 A.D.) Asterius presupposed the customariness of infant baptism and the duty of covenant parents to have their children baptized.<sup>349</sup> In fact, even most of the fourth-century heretics -- the Arians, the Donatists, the Symmachians, and the Pelagians -- all 'baptized' their own children.<sup>350</sup> This then was the situation right after the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325 -- and indeed also right down till that time, even from the Apostolic Age onward.

#### **145. Summary of baby belief before baptism in the Ante-Nicene Church**

We have seen that the infallible teaching of the Old Testament anent the infant faith of covenant children -- Psalm 22:9f & Jeremiah 1:5 *etc.* -- is the basis of the similar pure teachings of the New Testament. It is also the source of whatever is truthful in the perverted teaching of Judaism and Paganism, both of which were partly derived therefrom.

Thus, Early Judaism (between Old and New Testament times) taught that the godly were 'righteous' -- even before their circumcision. The infants of proselytes were similarly regarded, as soon as their parents had been judaized. Indeed, not just John the baptizer but also Philo the hellenized Judaist and the historian Josephus the Sadducee -- presupposed presacramental piety in covenant infants. So too did the Jewish *Talmud* -- and also the Hebraists Selden and Witsius thereanent.

Many forms of Paganism, in the Near East and in Ancient Greece, credit infants with faith. Such religions practised water-rites, also by way of sprinkling. It was, however, especially the Early Church Fathers who meaningfully transmitted -- and for quite a while preserved -- the true teachings of the Old and New Testaments about these matters.

Thus, Clement of Rome mentions Christian messengers -- who had been unblameable from their youth onward. The *Didachē* prohibits abortion -- and urges baptism. The *Epistle of Barnabas* encourages Christians to be fruitful -- and to baptize by sprinkling. Ignatius, Pliny and Papias all evidence that Christians had their households baptized. Indeed, the *Shepherd of Hermas* describes Christ's justified bride -- and her children.

The '*New Testament Apocrypha*' regards the baptism of babies as a seal of an even earlier infant faith. Justin Martyr insists fetuses are conscious, and that covenant infants trust in Christ. He had a comprehensive doctrine of faith before baptism -- which is especially prominent in his

*Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*. Indeed, Polycarp -- who at the end of his life claimed to have served Christ for eighty-six years -- must have had faith even when an infant.

Other martyrs in the middle of the second century who had believed ever since their babyhood -- include Hierax, Paeon, Papyrus, Maximus, Irenaeus of Sirmium, and Sabas. Athenagoras and Theodotus insist that human fetuses are sentient. Irenaeus of Lyons believed in the salvation of covenant children from conception onward. Indeed, Polycrates claimed he had "always" walked with God.

Clement of Alexandria stated: that pagan sprinklings anticipated Christian baptism; that embryos are conscious; and that covenant infants are believers. He strongly stressed Christ's care of unweaned babies, even before they received infant baptism by way of 'dew' or 'showers.' Indeed, he also emphasized the need of their lifelong disciplining thereafter.

Archeological evidence corroborates both the doctrine of original sin as well as that of the covenant also with the infants of believers. So too does the ancient *Egyptian Church Order*, where it insists: "First baptize the little ones!"

Although Tertullian sadly shifted toward Semimontanism, he did not deny but clearly admitted the Paedobaptism of the Early Church -- even tracing it back to the words of Christ in Luke 18:15f. Tertullian himself regarded even prenatal infants as thoroughly sentient -- and sprinkling as the preferred mode of postnatal baptism. Very significantly, on the basis of First Corinthians 7:14, he viewed the infants of believers as themselves 'holy' -- even before their birth.

Hippolytus, in his *Apostolic Traditions*, taught that the little ones in Christian families are to be baptized. Origen too called infant baptism an apostolic tradition, and reflected this in all of his Bible Commentaries. Cyprian said newborn babies of believers could and should be baptized even before a week old -- and indeed by way of sprinkling. Significantly it is not till then -- in the middle of the third century (A.D.) -- that we encounter the incipient doctrine of baptismal regenerationism outside of Paganism in Christian circles.

All extant inscriptions from A.D. 200 to 300, support infant faith within, and the early baptism of, the children of believing adults. According to Eusebius and Lactantius -- compare too the Synod of Elvira and Athanasius -- this occurred by way of sprinkling. Asterius taught the practice of infant baptism as a duty of believing parents. And even most of the fourth-century heretics -- such as the Donatists, the Arians, the Symmachians and the Pelagians -- all had their own children baptized.

So then -- the Old Testament teaches infant faith and infant circumcision, and the New Testament teaches infant faith and infant baptism. Yet also Paganism and Judaism presuppose the privileged position of a religionist's own infants. Further, certainly infant faith -- and it would seem also infant baptism -- was clearly taught by the Early Church Fathers. That was long before Christianity ceased to be persecuted by a hostile state -- at the advent of the first Christian Emperor in 321 A.D.

The above, then, is the testimony especially of: Clement of Rome; the *Didachē*; Barnabas; Justin Martyr; Irenaeus; Clement of Alexandria; Tertullian; Hippolytus; Origen; and Cyprian. It

is the conclusion yielded also by: the archaeological evidence; the inscriptions; the extant ordinances; and the canons of the Early Church Councils themselves.

## ENDNOTES

- 1) Genesis 34:15f; 35:2f; Ex. 4:24-26; 12:22,43-49; 14:19 to 15:12; 18:12f; 18:12f; 24:6-11; Num. 15:15; I Cor. 10:1-2; Heb. 11:28f & 13:10-16. See too Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 10f.
- 2) II Kgs. 5:1-18, esp. vv. 10 (LXX); Dan. 4:33 & 5:21 (LXX).
- 3) Wall's *op. cit.*, ed. 1836, I p. xli. See Cullmann's *op. cit.* pp. 25f & 60-65; and Lee's *Sprinkling is Scriptural* pp. 22f.
- 4) Ps. 106:32-40; I Kgs. 16:31-34 & 21:25-29 *cf.* Rev. 2:20-23; Jer. 7:17-21,31 & 44:17-25; Ezk. 8:6 to 9:6 ("little children"); 16:3-6,20f,36; 20:26,31f; 23:37.
- 5) Dr. Rose of St. Andrews, the eminent Scottish authority on classic pagan mystery religions, declares that an "old and popular rite...had the carrying of...a kind of small maypole. The bearers of it were children.... The Athenian children sang: '*Eiresione* brings figs and fat loaves...and oil to scrape her off!'" J.H. Rose: *Religion in Greece and Rome* (Harper, New York, 1959, p. 75). Too, "the *Ephebi* marched out to Eleusis.... The legally qualified were all Hellenes, and subsequently all Romans, above a certain very youthful limit of age." Thus Rose & Farnell: *Mystery [Religions]*, in 1929 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, XVI:47.
- 6) Cited in J. Jeremias: *The Origins of Infant Baptism*, Napierville Ill., 1963, p. 11.
- 7) See our main text at nn. 66-72 below. 8) *Aboth* RN 16 (6a); *San.* 91b; *Gen. R.* 34 (21a); *etc.*
- 9) *Gen.* 6:9-18f & 7:4-7f *cf.* I Pet. 3:20f. 10) *Gen.* 15:6 & 17:1,10-14 *cf.* Rom. 4:9-12.
- 11) *Ecclus.* 1:14-16. See J.P. Lange's *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, ET, Clark, Edinburgh, 1880. Vol. XV of the Old Testament, containing the Apocrypha = E.C. Bissell's *The Apocrypha of the Old Testament*, Clark, Edinburgh, 1880, pp. 280,288,290.
- 12) *Testament of Levi* 3:2 to 5:15. In editor R.H. Platt Jr.'s *Forgotten Books of Eden* pp. 220 & 228-33, in the 1976 Collins-Fontana edition of the *The Lost Books of the Bible and the Forgotten Books of Eden*. See too J. Jeremias's *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*, S.C.M., London, 1960, pp. 24-28. *Cf.* too the latter's original German version, Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, Göttingen, 1958, pp. 30-37: "In the second century B.C., at the conversion of a Gentile to Judaism, circumcision sufficed and nothing is said of a baptismal washing (*Testament of Judah* 14,10; *Achior*). It is only toward the end of the first century B.C. that the transition was made to attribute personal uncleanness to the Gentile. It is obvious that one in this way wished to prevent mismarriages between Jews and Gentile women. Compare *Test. Levi* 14,6." Also see J. Jeremias's *Proselyte Baptism and New Testament*, in *Theological Journal* V, 1949, pp. 418-28.
- 13) *Test. Levi* 14,6 (thus Jeremias) = *Test. Levi* 4:17 in Platt's *op. cit.* II p. 231. (Jeremias's *Inf. Bapt.*, ET pp. 24-28; *cf.* too the 1958 original German version pp. 30-37).
- 14) See the arts. *Hillel* and *Tannaim* in A.M. Hyamson & A.M. Silbermann's *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, Shapiro & Vallentine, London, 1939, pp. 286 & 633.
- 15) *b. Shab.* 135b *Bar.* Compare: *Ger.* 2:1; *Keth.* 1:2-4; 3:1-2; *Qid.* 78a *Bar. par. b. Yeb.* 60b; *j. Qid.* 4:66a.10; *j. Bik.* 1:64a.31f; *j. Yeb.* 8.9b.62f; *Pes.* 8:8.
- 16) *Op. cit.* pp. 37f.
- 17) See Tertullian's *On Baptism* 15; A. Dupont-Sommer's *The Jewish Sect of Qumran and the Essenes*, Vallentine & Mitchell, London, 1955, pp. 150f; F.N. Lee's *Catechism Before Communion!*, Ed. D. dissertation, Dominion School of Education, Fla., 1989, pp. 69f (paras. 262-66); and F.N. Lee's *Sprinkling Is Scriptural!*, in *The Presbyterian*, Bristol, July 1990, pp. 24f. U.C. Ewing's work *The Prophet of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Philosophical Library, New York, 1963) is both cavalier and superficial.
- 18) Mt. 23:15. 19) Mt. 28:19 & I Jh. 5:6-8. 20) H. Witsius: *On the Covenants*, Tegg, London, ed. 1837, II p. 421.
- 21) Jeremias: *op. cit.* pp. 35f *cf.* *Gen.* 17:5-10f & *Lk.* 1:59f. 22) Pridmore: *op. cit.* p. 113.
- 23) Mt. 3:2f & Mk. 1:5f. 24) Tert.: *Against Marcion* 4:33. 25) Greg. Naz.: *Oration* 39. 26) *Op. cit.* p. 46.
- 27) *Ib.* p. 75. An amazing statement, coming from a (somewhat sacramentalistic) Lutheran scholar!
- 28) Philo: *On the Cherubs* 12-15. Comp. too: *Lk.* 2:7 & 2:21.

- 29) Philo: *To Gaius* 16:31; and as cited in Ayres: *op. cit.* pp. 102f.
- 30) Cf. Philo's *On Joseph* 251 & his *On the Life of Moses* I:5. 31) Acts 16:14-16; 16:30-34; 18:8; *etc.*
- 32) Josephus's *Ant.* 4:70,300; 5:11. 33) Josephus: *Against Apion*, I:8,12; 2:19,26,27.
- 34) Cited in Ayres: *op. cit.* pp. 102f. 35) *Antiq.* 18:3:3 & 18:5:2 compare *Life* 1 & 23.
- 36) See the arts. *Ezra the scribe* and *Mishnah and Talmud*, in A.M. Hyamson & A.M. Silbermann's *op. cit.*, pp. 219 & 433 & 630f. Also note the remarks by the famous Baptist Rev. Dr. John Gale, in his *Reflections on Mr. Wall's 'History of Infant baptism'* (in the latter's III pp. 344f): "Several of the greatest rabbins, as Serira Gaon, Jehuda Ben-Levi, the author of Meor Enajim, Abraham Ben-David, Rab. Minchas, Isaac Abravanel &c -- and, from these, the most learned Christian writers -- say the ancientest part of the *Talmud* (namely that which is called the *Mischna*) was not compiled till about one hundred and fifty years after the destruction of Jerusalem. Buxtorf says, 'the *Jerusalem Talmud* was compiled by Jochanan, two hundred and thirty years after Christ.' But the *Gemara*, which is the far greatest part of the *Babylonic Talmud*, was not made till five hundred years after Christ, nor till three hundred and eleven after the *Mishna*, according to Abraham Ben-David and Ganz" (*Tzemach David* ad an. 978 millen. 4 & ad an. 260 millen. 5).
- 37) *Niddah* 30b. 38) *Keth.* 11a. 39) *Yeb.* 48b; *Bar. par. Ger.* 2:6f; *Yeb.* 22a,62a,97b; and *b. Bek.* 47a.
- 40) *Erub.* 11:1 & *Test. Levi* 14:6. See too *b. Shab.* 135<sup>b</sup> *Ber.*; *Ger.* 2:1; *Keth.* 1:2-4; 3:1-2; *Qid.* 78a; *Ber. par. b. Yeb.* 60b; *Qid.* 4:66a.10; *j. Bik.* 1:64a.31f; *j. Yeb.* 8.9b.62f; and *Pes.* 8:8.
- 41) *Mass. Jeramoth* f. 47 and *Gemara Babylon* at *Cheriroth* 2 and at *Chethuboth* I:11. Cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 4, 8 & 15.
- 42) *Hierosol. Jeramoth* f. 8.4. Cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 13. 43) *Niddah* 30b. 44) *Keth.* 11a.
- 45) *Yeb.* 48b *Bar. par. Ger.* 2:6f; *Yeb.* 22a,62a,97b; *b. Bak.* 47a. 46) *Erub.* 11:1. 47) *Chethuboth* I:11.
- 48) *Jevamoth* 4:62:1. 49) *On Baptism* 5:5. 50) *Epistle* 73. 51) *39th Oration*.
- 52) Rabbi's Solomon and Joseph, in Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 12 & 17. Also the Talmudic tract *Repud.* & ad tit. *Cheriroth* 2. See too M. Maimonides: *Issuri Bia*, chs. 12-14. Cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 3f, 11f, 17 & 30f.
- 53) M. Maimonides: *Halach. Hibdim.*, ch. 8. Cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 13, and in J.H.A. Bomberger's *Infant Salvation* (Lindsay & Blakiston, Philadelphia, 1859, p. 173).
- 54) I Cor. 10:1f. 55) Ex. 12:28,48f. 56) J. Selden's *On the Sanhedrin* I:3, cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 13f.
- 57) Ex. 24:8 *cf.* Heb. 9:10,13,19f & 10:22f.
- 58) J. Selden: *Miscellaneous Discourses* I ch. 8; *De Nat. et Gen. juxt. Heb.* II ch. 2; and *De Synedr.* I:3. All cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 10. See too L. Modeno's *The History of the Rites, Customs and Manner of Life of the Present Jews throughout the World*, translation E. Chilmead, London 1650 (as cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 7).
- 59) H. Witsius: *Economy of the Covenants* (Tegg, London, ed. 1837, II, pp. 421f).
- 60) Cf. e.g. Aben Ezra on Gen. 35:2 *cf.* 34:14,26,29. 61) *Op. cit.* II p. 422.
- 62) Ex. 19:10 *cf.* v. 14 (and *Mekilta* & Nachmanid. & Bechai & Mik. *etc.* thereon). See too the Talmudic *Tract. Repud. ad Tit. Cherithoth* ch. 2. All in Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 6.
- 63) See: the *Gemara Bab. Jit. Tabinoth* c. IV fol. 47; M. Maimonides's *More Neboch.* III c. 33; J. Selden's *De Synedr.* I c. 3 on Lev. 11:25,28,40 & 14:8,47 & Num. 19:10,21 & 31:24; Hammond's *Six Queries on Infant Baptism* sect. 78 (in *Works* I).
- 64) *Op. cit.* I p. 21. 65) *Origins*, pp. 46 & 75. 66) Gen. 7:11f *cf.* I Pet. 3:20f.
- 67) Gen. 10:1-6,13; Ex. 12:37; 13:12f; 14:21f; 24:8; 29:21; Lev. 214:7f; Num. 19:2f; Pss. 77:15-20; 78:12-14; I Cor. 10:1-2; Heb. 6:2; 9:14-21; 11:24-29. See too Ayres: *op. cit.* p. 464.
- 68) Lev. 18:21; II Kgs. 16:3; 21:2-6; 23:10; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6; Ps. 106:38; Jer. 7:17,30f; 32:35; Ezk. 16:3f,20f,36; 20:26f; 23:37; Hos. 3:2-5 & 9:9-16; Acts 7:42f.
- 69) Cf. Acts 15:19-21. 70) Thus Ayres: *op. cit.* pp. 17-44. 71) Virgil: *Aeneid* Bk. IX.
- 72) Ovid: *Fasti* [Poetical Calendars] I:669-74 & IV:313f,651f,727f,735-42,776,789 & VI. Cf. Ayres: *op. cit.* ch. IX & pp. 422f & 431f and ch. XI & p. 543.
- 73) Cf. Ayres: *op. cit.* ch. XI & p. 543.
- 74) Justin Martyr: *First Apology* chs. 62 & 64. See too our main text at nn. 158f below.
- 75) Iren.: *Against Heresies* I:21:1-4. 76) Clem. Alex.: *Strom.* V:11. See too our text at nn. 217f.
- 77) Tert.: *On Baptism*, ch. V & esp. para. 5. 78) Tert.: *Prescriptions Against Heretics*, ch. 40.
- 79) Cyprian: *On the Lapsed* III:9,25. 80) Theodoret: *Ecclesiastical History* III ch. 12.
- 81) Greg. Naz.: *Orat.* 39:3. See too Ayres: *op. cit.* chs. VI, VII & IX.
- 82) *Nizzachon* pp. 53 & 192, as cited by the Baptist Rev. Dr. J. Gale (in Wall's *op. cit.* III p. 349).
- 83) *Chizzuk Emunah*, p. 401, as cited in Gale. See Wall's *op. cit.* III p. 351. 84) *Epistle to Diognetus* ch. 5.
- 85) Chs. 27-29 & 43. 86) Chs. 3 & 33f. 87) Minucius Felix: *Octavius* chs. 9 & 30.

88) Augustine: *Against Julian* II:9 (in Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 230-32). 89) In his *Two Stud.*, p. 144.  
90) Phil. 4:3. 91) Clem. Rom.: *1st Ep. to Cor.* 9:4 *cf.* I Pet. 3:20f.  
92) Clem. Rom.: *1st Ep. to Cor.* 12:5f & 17:1 & 18:1f (*cf.* Josh. 2:13-18; Heb. 11:31; Job 14:4; Ps. 51:5).  
93) *Op. cit.* ch. 21; *cf.* I Cor. 1:16 & 2:10-12 & 7:14 & 12:13. 94) Prov. 20:27 *cf.* Ps. 139:7-16.  
95) I Cor. 7:14 *cf.* Eph. 6:1-4. 96) *1st Ep. to Cor.* 38 *cf.* Rom. 4:11f & 16:5f & I Cor. 7:14.  
97) *1st Ep. to Cor.* 63:3 *cf.* 65:1.  
98) *Ib.* 46:5 *cf.* Acts 1:5 & 2:1-4,14-21,36-39. Note too the phrase "strangers of Rome" in Acts 2:10.  
99) Gen. 1:26-28 & 2:16-25 and Ex. 20 *cf.* Hos. 6:7f. 100) *Ep. Barn.* 1:1-2; 2:1-2; 5:2.  
101) *Did.* 7:1-3 (*cf.* I Cor. 7:14 & 10:1-2 & 12:13). *Did.* 7:4 goes on to say: "Before baptism, let the baptizer fast...one or two days before." Antipaedobaptists sometimes claim this proves babies could not have met that requirement, and therefore could not then have been baptized. See H.F. Stander & J.P. Louw: *Baptism in the Early Church*, Didaskalia Pubs., Garsfontein RSA, 1988, p. 7. However, not only is that 'requirement' extra-biblical and therefore to be ignored. But as P.W. Marais, citing Jonah 3:5-8 and Joel 2:15-16, rightly points out in his *Infant Baptism and Sprinkling -- Yes or No?* (W & M Pubs., Pretoria, 1974, p. 143): "I find nothing in this passage which teaches that the baptismal candidate should be an adult, since an infant too can fast." Stander and Louw (*op. cit.* p. 8) themselves indeed admit this, where they concede: "Common sense allows for babies to be able to fast."  
102) *en hudati zōnti.* 103) *Cf.* Jh. 3:23. 104) *eis allo hudōr.* *Cf.* Acts 10:47f & 11:13-17 & 16:31-33.  
105) *eis tēn kephalēn.* 106) *eis Onoma.* 107) *Op. cit.* p. 289. 108) Gen. 1:26f. 109) *Ep. Barn.* ch. 6.  
110) *Ib.* ch. 8. *Cf.* Gen. 1:26 & Num. 19:4f & Dt. 29:29 & 31:11f.  
111) *Ep. Barn.* ch. 9. Comp.: Jer. 4:3f; 9:25f; Dt. 10:16.  
112) *Ep. Barn.* ch. 11. See too Jer. 2:12f & Jh. 3:23 *cf.* Josh. 3:11.15 & 4:1.17.22. 113) *eis to hudōr.*  
114) *Ep. Barn.* ch. 13, *cf.* Gen. 25:23. 115) *Ep. Barn.* ch. 14, *cf.* Isa. 47:6f & 61:1f. 116) *Ep. Barn.* ch. 19.  
117) *Ib.* chs. 20 & 21. 118) See our text at nn. 91-117.  
119) Ign.: *Epistle to Smyrna* 1:1 (compare Mt. 3:15); 8:2 (compare I Cor. 4:1f & Heb 5:4f); 13:1.  
120) *Epistle to Polycarp* 8:2. 121) Isa. 59:21.  
122) *Epistle to Polycarp* 6:2 (comp.: Eph 6:11f & I Th. 5:8 with Gal. 3:26-29 & 4:28).  
123) Pliny: *Epistle to Trajan* X:96:2. 124) *Op. cit.*, p. 11. 125) Aristides: *Apology* 15:6 & 15:11.  
126) It seems to be referring to the pre-baptismal condition of those infants -- *cf.* the pre-baptismal condition of adult pagans who repent. For Aristides soon goes on (*op. cit.* 17:4) to describe the similar regeneration of adult pagan converts *before* their baptism: "When it happens that one of them is converted, he is ashamed before the Christians anent the works which he has done. He thanks God, saying, 'In ignorance have I done them!' So he purifies his heart -- and his sins are forgiven him." See too Warfield's *Two Stud.* p. 144 and H.B. Harris's *The Newly Discovered Apology of Aristides* (London, 1891, p. 108).  
127) Generally called *Mathētēs* (= 'Disciple'). 128) *Epistle to Diognetus* ch. 5 (Greek).  
129) Papias: *Fragment II.* In *Ante-Nicene Fathers (ANF)*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1969, I, p. 153.  
130) J. Jeremias: *Inf. Bap. First Four Cent.*, pp. 11 & 72. 131) *Shepherd of Hermas* I:3:7. 132) *Ib.* III:9:29.  
133) *Ib.* III:31:3 (compare Mt. 18:3-6 & 19:14).  
134) *Herm.* I:3:6f, Latin; & III:9:29f, Latin. Compare Lev. 19:23 & Lk 11:41, Greek *kathara*.  
135) *Herm.* II:2:1. 136) *Ib.* II:4:3 & III:9:16f. Compare Rom. 4:11; Eph. 4:30; 5:25f; 6:1-4; Rev. 7:2f; 22:4.  
137) *Herm.* III:8:3f compare Rom. 11:16 & I Cor. 7:14.  
138) *Herm.* I:1:9 (*cf.* I:3:1 & II:2:7 & III:5:3 & III:7:5f) and II:2:3 & II:3:1 & II:12:3 (compare Ign. *Ep. Smyrn.* 13:1 at our n. 119 above).  
139) *Herm.* II:4:3 & III:9:16f. Compare: Rom. 4:11; II Cor. 1:21f; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:11f; Eph. 4:30; 5:25f 6:1-4; Rev. 27:2f; 9:4f; 14:1; 22:4.  
140) *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 32,34,40. 141) *Acts of Paul* 3,24,31. 142) *Acts of Peter* 5.  
143) *Acts of Xanthippe & Polyxena* 2,13,28.  
144) *Rest of the Words of Baruch* 6,23. Compare Rom. 4:11 & Rev. 7:2-4f.  
145) *Gospel of Thomas*, Logion 4 (*cf.* Gen. 17:10-14 & Col. 2:11f).  
146) *Ib.* Logion 22 *cf.* Gen. 17:12f & II Sam. 12:18-23. 147) *1st Ap.* 18.  
148) A.C. Coxe: *Notes on Justin Martyr.* In *ANF* I pp. i & 169 n. 2. 149) *1st Ap.* ch. 27.  
150) *Ib.* ch. 29. Compare Eph. 6:1-4 with 4:4f,30 & 5:25f.  
151) *Ib.* 15:6 (*hoi ek paidōn emathēteuthēsan tō, Christō*). 152) *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho* 39:2.  
153) *Cf.* Justin's *1st Ap.* chs. 15:6 and 61 & 65 with A.C. Barnard's *I Have Been Baptized*, DRC Bookroom, Pretoria, 1984, p. 78.



- 154) Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 66-171.
- 155) *Cf.* the writings of the apostle in Jh. 3:3-8 & I Jh. 2:12-14 & Rev. 7:2-4 & 22:4.
- 156) *Dial.* 4:1 (compare too *West. Conf.* 10:3).
- 157) *Dial.* chs. 86-88. Compare Lev. 14:7f & Num. 19:4f *etc.* with Heb. 9:10-21. 158) *Ist Ap.* chs. 61-65.
- 159) *Apost. Const.* VI:1:3 & VI:2:5 & VI:3:14f. See our text at pp. 246 & 311 and at ch. IV's n. 47 below.
- 160) *Ist Ap.* ch. 61: "*Hosoi an peisthōsi kai pisteuōsin..., kainopoiēthentes dia tou Christou exēgēsometha.... Hoi hamertēsantes kai metanountes. Touton lousomenon agontes epi to loutron.... Ho phōtizomenos louetai.*" Significantly, even a modern Romish translation likewise seems to presuppose illumination before baptism: "Those who are convinced and believe..., are taught.... We lead them to a place where there is water.... Those who have sinned and then repented, shall be freed of their sins.... At our first birth..., [we] were born...through the mutual union of our parents.... He who leads the person to be baptized to the laver..., calls him by this Name [of God the Father] only the illuminated one, is also baptized." Thus the rendition of the Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C., 1965 rep., *in loco*. The last two underlined words above are rendered in Latin at Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* respectively as "*lavacrum*" and "*qui illuminatur abluitur.*" Almost the entirety of the full Greek text of ch. 61 is given in Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 67.
- 161) *Ib.* chs. 62 & 64. See too our text at n. 74 above.
- 162) *Ib.* ch. 65: "*Meta to houtōs lousai ton pepeismenon kai sugkatatetheimenon....kai tou phōtisthentos.*" Even the modern Catholic University of America Press translation renders this: "After thus baptizing the one who has believed and given his assent, we...offer up sincere prayers...for the baptized person." The underlined words above are rendered in Latin at Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* as "*pro eo qui illuminatus est.*"
- 163) Just. Mart.: *From the Lost Writings* Fragment 9, in *ANF* I pp. 300f. 164) *Ib.* Fragment 10.
- 165) *Dial.* ch. 6 *cf.* ch. 12. 166) *Ib.* ch. 14:1 (compare *Ist Ap.* chs. 61 & 65). 167) *Dial.* ch. 29.
- 168) *Dial.* chs. 18 & 19. 169) *Ib.* chs. 14 & 16. 170) *Ib.* ch. 23 (compare Gen. 15:6).
- 171) *Dial.* ch. 23 (compare Gen. 17:10-14 & Rom. 4:11). 172) *Dial.* ch. 24. 173) *Ib.* ch. 113. 174) *Ib.* ch. 28.
- 175) *Ib.* ch. 43.
- 176) Gen. 5:18-24 *cf.* Heb. 11:5-6 & Prov. 22:6. 177) *Dial.* ch. 92 (compare Gen. 15:6 & 17:1-26 with Rom. 4:11).
- 178) *Cf.* Rev. 1:1ff & 2:8ff with Iren.: *Her.* 3:3 (& Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 81).
- 179) Polyc.: *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 21, Waddington. See the main text at our n. 181 below. Barnard *op. cit.* p. 78 seems to suggest an infant baptism date of 70 A.D. for Polycarp. For he "died 22nd February 156," just after saying of Christ: "For eighty-six years I have been His servant." Polycarp's *Martyrdom* 9:3. Similarly, see too J.W.C. Wand's *A History of the Early Church to A.D. 500* (Methuen, London, ed. 1949, p.96); and ed. F.L. Cross's *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford Univ. Press, ed. 1978, p. 701). Also *cf.* Stander and Louw's *op. cit.* p. 9: "Barnard maintains that the age of Polycarp proves that he was probably born in the year 70 A.D., and that he was baptized as an infant. His opinion concerning this quotation is shared by the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (1978:701) and Wand (1949:96)."
- 180) Polyc.: *Epistle to the Philippians* ch. 4 (compare Eph. 4:4f,30 & 5:25f & 6:1-4). 181) *Mart. Polyc.* 9:3.
- 182) *Cf.* perhaps Rev. 2:8f. 183) Phil. 3:5,10,11,14,21. 184) *Ep. to Phil.* 4:2. 185) *Id.*
- 186) See n. 181 above. 187) *In loc.* 188) Anon: *The Martyrdom of Justin* ch. 3.
- 189) Cited in J. Jeremias's *Inf. Bapt.*, p. 64.
- 190) Cited in K. Aland: *Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?*, S.C.M., London, 1961 p. 72.
- 191) Irenaeus of Sirmium: *Martyrdom of Irenaeus* 4:3. Cited in R. Knopf & G. Krüger: *Selected Acts of the Martyrs*, Tübingen, 1929, 104.1. Thus Jeremias's *Inf. Bapt.*, p. 61 n. 3.
- 192) Anon: *Martyrdom of Sabas*. Cited in Knopf-Krüger's *op. cit.* 119.16f. See Jeremias's *Inf. Bapt.*, p. 61 & n. 3.
- 193) W.W. Gasque: *Marcion (second century)*, in ed. Douglas's *op. cit.* pp. 629ff.
- 194) Justin Martyr: *Ist Ap.* chs. 26 & 58. 195) Iren. *Her.* I:23:1 to I 27:1f & IV:8:1.
- 196) Epiph.: *Heresies* 42 (*Marcionistae*). 197) Clem. Alex.: *Strom.* III:3. 198) Tert.: *Bap.* 15.
- 199) Philaster: *Heresies* 49. 200) Athenagoras: *Apology* ch. 35.
- 201) Athenagoras: *On the Resurrection* 14:65:12f. 202) Theodotus: *Excerpts* 7 & 5 (in *ANF* VIII pp. 44 & 43).
- 203) *Excerpts* 48 & 50. See too *Ante-Nic. Fath.*, VIII pp. 43-48.
- 204) Iren.: *Her.* II:33f & IV:20 & V:6 (in Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 81). *Cf.* Iren.: *Epistle to Florinus* (in Eusebius's *Ch. Hist.* V:20:1).
- 205) *Ib.* II:22:4 (*cf.* Lk. 3:21-23 & Ex. 29:21 & Num. 4:3f).

206) *Her.* III:17:1-3 *cf.* I:21:1-3 & *Fragment XXXIII* Harvey II 497f. 207) *Isa.* 52:15; 56:3-7; *Joel* 2:16,23,28f.  
208) *Judges* 6:37 *etc.* 209) *Cf.* again our text at n. 205 above.  
210) *Ib.* IV:6:7 (*cf.* *Mt.* 11:25-27). See too our ch. I at our nn. 160f & 191f above. See too J. Inchley's *op. cit.* pp. 20f, and Lee's *Revealed to Babies* pp. 1 & 6f.  
211) *Against Heresies* V:15:3. Compare too *ib.* I:21:1 ("baptism...is regeneration to God").  
212) *Iren.*: *Frag.* XXXIV, in *ANF* I p. 574. 213) Eusebius: *Church History* V:24:6-8.  
214) *Id.*: "*Hexēkonta pente etē echōn en Kuriō...* *En Christō, Iēsou pantote pepoliteumai.* On this *pepoliteumai*, see too *Eph.* 2:12-19! Also comp. Barnard's *op. cit.* p. 78; and Stander & Louw's *op. cit.* pp. 9f.  
215) See n. 178f above. 216) *Inf. Bap.* p. 59. 217) *Clem. Alex.*: *Strom.* IV:22. See too our text at n. 76 above.  
218) Cited in Ayres: *op. cit.*, p. 317. 219) *Clem. Alex.*: *Exhortation to the Heathen*, X:12-13. 220) *Strom.* III:4.  
221) *Ib.* II:18. 222) *Clem. Alex.*: *Eclogia* 41 & 48 (*cf.* the apocryphal *Rev. Pet.* 25).  
223) *Strom.* II:9 (*cf.* *I Pet.* 3:20f & 4:6). 224) *Clem. Alex.*: *Protrepticus* 9:82. 225) *Jh.* 3:3f.  
226) Such as: *Mt.* 18:3-6; *Mk.* 10:15; *Lk.* 19:17. 227) *Just. Mart.*: *1st Ap.* 61:4).  
228) *Clem. Alex.*: *Paidagogue* I:5.  
229) *Paedag.* I:6-7. Perhaps (but not necessarily) betraying just the beginnings of the false theory of baptismal regeneration, Clement unfortunately then adds: "Being baptized, we are illuminated; being illuminated, we become sons; being sons, we become perfected; being perfected, we become immortalized." Here the original Greek has: "*baptizomena phōtizometha, phōtizomena huiopoioumetha, huiopoioumenoī teleiōumetha, teleiōumenoī apathanatizometha.*" This is a series of passive present participles. The series not necessarily suggests baptismal regeneration, any more than our "being sons" in this present life now (both before and after baptism) could possibly suggest the completion of our being perfected before the next life yet to come. Nevertheless, the ambiguity in these words is unfortunate. Later advocates of baptismal regeneration have appealed to this phrase in Clement as if it were indeed teaching that later doctrine.  
230) *op. cit.* p. 44.  
231) A.W. Argyle: *Baptism in the Early Christian Centuries*, in ed. A. Gilmore's *Christian Baptism* (Lutterworth, London, 1959, p. 202 & n. 8). Argyle here employs the latinization (*Paedagogus*) of the Greek *Paidagōgos*.  
232) *Paidag.* III:11. See too Stander and Louw's *op. cit.* pp. 42f, and Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 84f.  
233) *Paidag.* III:12. A more flowery version reads as follows: "Heavenly Wing of the all-holy flock, Fisher of men who are saved, catching the chaste fishes with sweet life from the hateful wave of a sea of vices!... Babies nourished with tender mouths, filled with the dewy Spirit of the rational pap -- let us sing together simple praises, true hymns to Christ our King, holy fee for the teaching of life!"  
234) *Clem. Alex.*: *Who is the Rich Man that shall be Saved?*, chs. 34,40,42. 235) *Strom.* II:13 (*cf.* *Jh.* 1:13).  
236) *Strom.* II:23. 237) *Strom.* III:15 (*cf.* *Ex.* 20:12). 238) *Strom.* III:15 (*cf.* *Isa.* 65:22f).  
239) *I Tim.* 3:2-4 & *Tit.* 1:6. 240) *Strom.* IV:15-35, esp. IV:15:20 (*cf.* *Tit.* 2:3-5 & *Heb.* 13:4).  
241) *Op. cit.* pp. 10 & 113.  
242) Cited in Stander & Louw's *op. cit.* pp. 59-63, from Hippolytus's *Apostolic Tradition* 20-22. *Cf.* too J. Jansen: *The Right of Infant Baptism*, Kok, Kampen, n.d., *in loco*.  
243) J. Jeremias: *Inf. Bap.* pp. 66-68, and the photograph facing p. 64. 244) See our text at nn. 217-41 above.  
245) See our text at nn. 310-324 below. 246) P. Schaff: *Ch. Hist.*, II p. 301 n. 1 & p. 307.  
247) *Ib.* II p. 302. 248) *Op. cit.* p. 78.  
249) E. Diehl's *Ancient Christian Latin Inscriptions* (Berlin, 1961); J.C. Didier's *Infant Baptism in the Tradition of the Church* (in *Selected Christian Monuments* VII, Tournai, 1959); and E. Ferguson's *Inscriptions and the Origin of Infant Baptism* (in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 1979, XXX, pp. 37-46).  
250) Schaff's *Church History* II p. 303 item 2; p. 304 item 20; p. 304, items 5 & 4; p. 249 n. 3, where Schaff is citing De Rossi.  
251) B.B. Warfield: *How Shall We Baptize?*, in *Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield*, ed. Meeter, Presb. & Ref. Pub. Co., Nutley N.J., 1973, p. 337.  
252) R. Ward: *Baptism in Scripture and History*, Melbourne, 1990, pp. 42f.  
253) C.F. Rogers: *Baptism and Christian Archaeology*, Oxford, 1903, p. 322.  
254) J.G. Davies: *The Architectural Setting of Baptism*, London, 1962, pp. 23-26. See too Ayres: *op. cit.* pp. 376A & 389-419.  
255) *Ib.* p. 309.

256) F.N. Lee: *Pentecostalism: New Outpouring or Ancient Heresy?*, Commonwealth Pub., Rowlett Tx., 1986, paras. 4 & 15 & 24 to 27. See too Ayres: *op. cit.* pp. 527 to 624 & 594-96 (citing the A.D. 381 Council of Chalcedon's condemnation of Montanistic immersionism or *katadusis*).

257) Compare, e.g., his perception that pagan sprinklings were themselves perversions of the "Jewish Law." See our main text at our nn. 77 & 78 above. Cf. Heb. 9:10-21.

258) Tert.: *On Baptism* ch. 18. Cited in Jansen's *op. cit. (in loc.)*. 259) In Gilmore: *op. cit.* pp. 199f.

260) Tert.: *The Chaplet* 3; *On Idolatry* 24; *The Shows* 3; *The Apparel of Women* I:2.

261) This word "immersed" is that of the Baptist Argyle, not that of Tertullian. For some of Tertullian's views on the mode of baptism, see our text at nn. 291f below.

262) Tert.: *Against Praxeas* 26, and *On Baptism* 6. 263) *Chap.* 3, and *Against Marcion* 1:14.

264) *On Baptism* 7; *Chap.* 3; *Shows* 24; *Idol.* 19. 242) *On Bapt.* 4-5. 265) Tert.: *Apology* ch. 9.

266) Tert.: *On the Soul* ch. 37. 267) Ex. 21:22; Ps. 22:9f; 51:5; 139:13-16. 268) *Soul* chs. 25f.

269) *Chaplet* ch. 3. 270) *Repentance* 6.

271) See Tertullian's *On Baptism* ch. 2: "a man is baptized (*tinctus*)"; and ch. 12: "baptized (*tinctus*)" & "sprinkled (*aspersi*)" & "sprinkled over (*perfundi*)." See too Tertullian's *Prescription Against Heretics* ch. 40: "The devil...too baptizes (*tingit*).... Mithras there sets his mark on the foreheads of his soldiers.... The devil imitates the Jewish Law." See too Tertullian's *On Repentance* 6 (cited at our n. 276 below). Also compare our text at nn. 260 & 269 above.

272) See our main text at nn. 276f & 290f below. 273) *Op. cit.* pp. 324-38.

274) Tert.: *On Repentance* 6:4f (*asperginem unam cuiuslibet*).

275) See Schaff: *Ch. Hist.* II pp. 421 & 822; *ANF* III p. 4 & 240 (citing Augustine's *On Heresies* 6); cf. Hefele in *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers (NPNF)*, 2nd Ser., XIV pp. 128.

276) *Repent.* ch. 6. 277) On emergency baptisms, see n. 271 above. 278) See K. Aland: *op. cit.*, p. 67.

279) Tert.: *On Baptism* ch. 1. [*Ichthus*' means 'fish' in Greek. It was also an ancient Christian cryptogram, meaning: *'Iēsōus Christos Theou Huiōus Sōtēr'* -- alias 'Jesus Christ; God's Son; Saviour.']

280) *Ib.* ch. 4. Compare: Gen. 1:2 & Mt. 3:11-16. 281) *Ib.* ch. 5.

282) *Ib.* ch. 8, cf. Gen. 8:2-12 & I Pet. 3:20-21 & Lk. 3:21-22. 283) *Ib.* ch. 9, cf. Jh. 3:5.

284) *Ib.* ch. 16, cf. Jh. 19:34.

285) Mt. 7:6. Significantly, not just Tertullian as above but even the *Westminster Confession* (29:8<sup>a</sup>) applies this text to the need of withholding the sacrament from the unworthy. See too Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 100.

286) See chs. 18-19. 287) See our main text at nn. 264-76 above. 288) *Soul* chs. 19f & 26f.

289) *Soul* 39:1 to 40:1 & 41:1. 290) *Op. cit.* I p. 101. 291) *Soul* ch. 19f. 292) *Ib.* ch. 20.

293) As to what Tertullian here might mean, with probably reference to baptism, see our main text at n. 271 above.

294) *Op. cit.*, 1836 ed., I p. 183.

295) *Op. cit.* pp. 66 & 65. We say Aland is a maverick. For he seems to reject infant baptism as having been an apostolic or even an early-patristic ordinance. See our text at n. 297 below. Aland's rationale, however, may well be because he seems to sense (correctly) that covenant infants are not made holy during baptism, but are already holy before baptism!

296) Amazing, in that holiness at birth clearly undermines the Lutheran view that regeneration normally takes place only during (yet not because of) postnatal baptism. See, however, our remarks at n. 294 above.

297) *Op. cit.* p. 113. 298) *Ib.* pp. 100 & 48. 299) See too our main text at n. 245 above.

300) *The Origins of Infant Baptism*, p. 75. 301) *Op. cit.* pp. 202f. 302) *Ch. Hist.* II pp. 258f.

303) Thus *ANF* V p. 3. 304) See our main text above at n. 253f.

305) See too Jeremias: *Inf. Bap.* pp. 13, 31 and 73 nn. 5 & 6.

306) Hippolytus: *Concerning the Apostolic Tradition of Gifts of Grace* 21:3. 307) *Op. cit.* pp. 49f.

308) 21:3, see our main text at n 306 above. 309) Jeremias: *Inf. Bap.* p. 92.

310) Eusebius: *Ch. Hist.* VI:19:10. See too Wall's *op. cit.* pp. 73f.

311) *Ib.*, compare Jeremias's *Origins* p. 75. See too Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 78, 103f & 125.

312) Schaff: *Ch. Hist.* II p. 260 & n. 2.

313) Orig.: *Commentary on Matthew* XV (III:1268 sqq.), and *Comm. on Mt. 18:10* (XIII:331) cited in Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 115f & 120f.

314) Orig.: *Commentary on John* 6:13.

315) Orig.: *Commentary on Romans* V:9 ("*pro hoc et Ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem suscepit, etiam parvulis baptismum dare*)."

316) In his *Homilies on Luke* XIV. 317) In his *Homilies on Leviticus* VIII:3 (*secundum Ecclesiae observantium*).

318) Orig.: *Homilies on Luke* XXVIII, and *Commentaries on Fragments from John* 121. See too Stander & Louw's *op. cit.* pp. 68f.

319) J. Bajis: *Infant Baptism?*, Conciliar Press, Mt Hermon Ca., n.d., at nn. 18f. 320) See n. 318 above.

321) *Homilies on Ezekiel* 6:5. 322) *Comm.* XV:36 on 20:1-16.

323) Orig.: *Homilies on Joshua* 4:1 and IX:4. Cited respectively in Stander & Louw's *op. cit.* pp. 74f and in Wall's *op. cit.* I pp. 73f & 117f.

324) See Euseb.: *Ch. Hist.* VI:5. See too our own n. 329 below. 325) Cyp.: *Epistle* 58(64).

326) Cyp.: *Epistle* 72(73):17. 327) Anon: *Treatise on Rebaptism* 6. Ca. 253 A.D. See ANF V pp. 665f.

328) Euseb.: *Ch. Hist.* VI:43. Here, 'being perfused' translates "*perichuseis*" alias 'poured around.' Compare Wall's *op. cit.* I p. 142 (1844 Oxford ed.), where he quotes Petavius thus: "At present...we content ourselves with pouring a little water on the head, which in Greek is called *perichusis*." Dionysius Petavius was a French Jesuit (1583-1652), author of the most learned *Opus de Theologicis Dogmatibus*. Thus Ayres: *op. cit.* p. 351 & n. 1.

329) Cited in Wall's *op. cit.* (ed. 1844) I p. 160 & II p. 386: "I gave here the instance of St. Laurence out of Walafrid Strabo, baptizing with a pitcher of water, in a case of necessity; and of Basilides out of Eusebius." Ayres (*op. cit.* p. 352) explains: "Laurence suffered martyrdom about the same time as Cyprian, *i.e.*, A.D. 258. Wall gives the case [II pp. 389f]: 'One of the soldiers that were to be his executioners, being converted, brought a pitcher of water for Laurence to baptize him with'.... This passage seems to be genuine, because cited by Walafridus Strabo, who died about the year 849; *cf.* p. 13 of the same volume." On Basilides, see our main text at nn. 324 above.

330) Cyp.: *Ep.* 74(75):12-16 [Oxford ed. = 69].

331) See John Moschus's *Pratum Spirituale* ch. 176: "A certain Jew was travelling in company with some Christians through a dry and desert country.... He was seized with grievous illness, and...begged his companions to baptize him. They replied that there was neither priest nor water at hand.... But being earnestly adjured not to refuse him, they...sprinkled him three times, with sand instead of water, saying that they 'baptized' him in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.... On their return, Dionysius the Church Overseer of Alexandria, being consulted on the subject, decided...that the Jew was baptized if only he were sprinkled...with water (*baptizatum esse Judaeum si modo aqua denuo perfunderetur*)."

332) S. Angus: *The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World*, Murray, London, 1929, pp. 166f & nn. 1. Angus also refers to Tertullian's *Baptism* 5, and to his [*Prescriptions*] *Against Heresies* 40.

333) B.V. Miller: *The Eucharistic Sacrifice*, Burnes Oates & Washbourne, London, 1930, p. 17.

334) See Jeremias's *Inf. Bap.* pp. 41,56,75-79, 85-86, & 90-94. See too Jeremias's *Origins* pp. 59-53 & n. Ayres too (*op. cit.* pp. 377 & 396f) gives copious evidences about sprinkling: from inscriptions in the catacombs; on fonts; and in ancient baptisteries; *etc.*

335) *Acts of Crispina* 2:1 *cf.* 3:3. 336) *Ch. Hist.* II p. 401. 337) Pg. 145. 338) Pg. 31.

339) Euseb.: *Ch. Hist.* VI:5,43 & X:4:44f. 340) Lact.: *Divine Institutes* IV:15.

341) Synod of Elvira, canons 1 & 22.

342) Rufinus's *History of the Church* I:14; Sozomen's *Ecclesiastical History* I:17; and Athanasius's *Questions on Paul's Epistles* and *On Holy Baptism*.

343) *Ib.* pp. 155f: "Rivet, Marshall &c do accuse Grotius of partiality and foul dealing in general in his pleading the cause of the Antipaedobaptists, and particularly in this place.... See Rivet's *Hugonis Grotii Annotata in Consulationem G. Cassandri, cum animadversionibus Andae Riveti*, in his *Opera Theologica*, Rotterdam, 1651-60, III pp. 925-76 esp. at p. 941.

344) Wall then rightly comments (*ib.* p. 153): "The woman in this case does not desire or demand the baptism at that time for her child, but for herself only.... If the bishops had thought baptizing of infants unlawful, they would have determined this.... It is no kind of proof that they did think so.... They meant only to take away the perplexity about baptizing the child when born.... There is something in the propriety of phrase in the last clause that does incline it to this latter sense.... That is the notation of the word *idios*, which properly signifies any thing 'peculiar to one's self'; and the repetition of the article *tēn* before the words *epi tēi homologia*.  
"If the bishops *had* meant to determine that the child could not be supposed to be baptized with its mother for this reason, because in baptismal profession every one must declare his own choice; and so an infant could not be baptized -- they would have expressed that latter clause thus, *dia to heauton dein heautou teen proairesin en tēi homologia; deiknunai*, 'because every one must make his own choice at the profession.' But when they say *dia to heautou idian tēn proairesin tēn en tēi homologia; deikusthai* [as in fact they did], they do (as any critic will

observe} express this sense -- 'because the choice which is made at the [baptismal] profession, is declared by every one peculiar to himself... It is only a reason of what they had said last: 'that the mother communicates nothing to the child' -- and not any reason against the baptizing of an infant...."

345) *Ib.* pp. 156f: "Balsamon's comment on that canon is this: 'Some had said, "that women which come over from the heathens to the church great with child ought not to be baptized but to stay till they were delivered -- lest, when the mother is baptized, the child in her womb do seem to be baptized too, as being altogether united to her.... So when it is born it will either be left unbaptized, or if it be baptized it may be accounted to be twice-baptized."

Continued Balsamon: "The Fathers therefore, not allowing this contradiction, appointed that such women may be baptized without any scruple -- when[ever] they please. For that the woman has nothing common with the child in her womb in the concern of baptism -- especially, say they, when as to every one in baptism his own promising is necessary. But the embryo (*esterēmenon diatheseōs*), having not the qualification (or disposition or affection), cannot make the profession at [the mother's] baptism. And that clause 'when they please' was added to the canon.... The Fathers therefore said that it is at the woman's pleasure to be baptized when she will.... But [postnatal] infants do promise by their sponsors, and being actually baptized have the heavenly illumination granted to them."

346) *Ib.* pp. 157f: "Zonarus's words are these in his comment on the said canon: 'It determines that women with child may be baptized when they please.... Some affirmed "that the foetus is baptized together with the mother, and that therefore the infant when born must not be baptized lest it should have a double baptism." Therefore were those words added "for the mother in this matter communicated nothing to the child" -- *i.e.* for the mother only and not the child is made partaker of holy baptism.... In the foetus that is enclosed in the mother's womb there is no choice. It is not to be accounted to have received baptism. And therefore it has need of baptism...when it shall be able to choose."

347) *Ib.* pp. 158f: "We are now come so low as within sixty years of the time of St. Austin [alias Augustine]....

St. Austin sometimes speaks of this case of a woman baptized while great with child, and he does not only determine it as these bishops do but he speaks of it as a clear case.... He takes occasion to mention it, lib. vi *Contra Julianum* c. 5, where he is shewing the weakness of that argument of the Pelagians who said that if original sin be the cause why infants are baptized, then the child that was born of Christian and baptized parents would not need to be baptized -- as being born of those that were cleansed of that sin and of a mother whose body was the temple of the Holy Spirit.... Now, when such an infant is baptized, he will not be accounted twice-baptized."

348) Wall (*op. cit.* I pp. 150f), discusses an important quotation out of the Council of Neocaesarea [*anno* 314]. Therein the Arminian "Grotius (*Annot. in Mat. xix.14*) seems to himself to have found a proof out of it that many in that age judged that they are not to be baptized....

"Some about that time and place had put this question -- whether a 'woman with child' that had a mind to become a Christian and be baptized, might conveniently receive baptism during her 'going with child' -- or must stay [unbaptized] till she was delivered.... The words of the council...are these...: 'A woman with child may be baptized when she pleases. For the mother in this matter communicates nothing to the child, because in the profession every one's own [or peculiar] resolution (*idian proairesin*) is declared."

349) See too Asterius: *Homilies* 12:3f & 21:10 & 27:2f. 350) J. Jeremias: *Inf. Bap.* pp. 93f.