

DYING SAVED IN INFANCY ARE ANY DYING BABIES LOST?



2002 expanded edition of
Academic Dissertation
originally submitted 1991 in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S.)
Whitefield Theological Seminary U.S.A.
by



Francis Nigel Lee
B.A., Dip.Th., C.Litt., L.Th., B.D., LL.B.,
M.A., M.A.T.S., M.Th., M.Soc.Sc., M.Div.,
LL.D., D.Litt., D.Jur., D.Min., D.R.E., S.T.D., Ed.D., Th.D., Ph.D., D.C.L.
Sometime Professor of Systematic Theology
and
Caldwell-Morrow Lecturer in Church History
at the
Queensland Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Brisbane Australia

"The Son of man came to save the lost.... So it is not the will of
your Father...that one of these little ones should perish."
Matthew 18:11-14

Dedicated to my good friend Rev. Dr. Joe Morecraft III of Atlanta, who in the mid-seventies
very kindly provided me with much of the material presented in Chapters IX-X below.

DYING SAVED IN INFANCY

" Infant Salvation: Are any Dying Babies Lost? "

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

I. INFANT DAMNATION: ARE ALL OR ANY DYING BABIES LOST?

The Bible and the *Westminster Standards* on damnation of all unregenerates

The *Westminster Confession* on the election of infants

The Bible on faith within early-dying elect infants

Summary on infant damnation in the Bible and the *Westminster Confession*

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

Before and after the fall of the angels and of man

Unsubstantiated claims that all children of infidels saved

Are fallen infants permanently lost like the fallen angels?

Were the infants lost who drowned in the great flood?

Ham and his children - lost or saved?

The godly Melchizedek - and the ungodly adults of Sodom

Inherited sin and available salvation in the book of Job

Salvation even of prenatally-dying infants in book of Job

The infants of the ungodly at the exodus and thereafter

Children of the Midianites and other obnoxious nations

Exterminating nations like the Amelekites

Solomon's inspired hope for aborted or miscarried babies

Dr. Matthew Henry on hope for the miscarried in Ecclesiastes 4:2 to 11:5

Professor Franz Delitzsch's *Biblical Psychology*: fetal access to God's love

Rev. Prof. Dr. Delitzsch & Rev. J. Kok on the miscarried

Jeroboam's son Abijah and children saved by Elijah & Elisha

Jonah's little Ninevites and Isaiah's prophecies re babies

The "innocents" in the prophecies of Jeremiah

Ezekiel on God's tiny children born to ungodly parents

Does the psalmist encourage dashing babies against stones?

Post-exilic mercy - to the babies even of ungodly parents?

Summary of the Old Testament teaching on infant salvation

III. THE NEW TESTAMENT ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

Sanctifying power of Jesus' incarnation even from conception

The apostolic teaching in general anent infant salvation

The apostles James and Peter and John on infant salvation

Infant salvation in the *Westminster Confession* and in the various Declaratory Statements

Summary of the New Testament teaching on infant salvation

IV. THE EARLY CHURCH ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

Infant salvation in the post-apostolic Early Church
Even aborted babies of the wicked go to glory hereafter
Anti-heretical paedobaptist Irenaeus on infant salvation
Clement of Alexandria on God' s salvation also of babies
Infant salvation opposed by antipaedobaptizing Tertullian
Yet only the semi-montanizing Tertullian opposed outright sacramentalism
Cyprian (A.D. 250f) fathers false baptismal regenerationism
Lactantius (A.D. 300f) opposes killing of "innocent" infants
Gregory Nyssa the last bastion of prebaptismal regeneration
Gregory Nyssa: death of dying babies is for their own good
Warfield on Gregory Nyssa' s view of infant deaths
Crossing the Rubicon of baptismal regenerationism after 350
The '*Vision of Paul*': aborted infants in Heaven
After 390 A.D.: ' magical baptism' soon conquered the Church
Sacramentalization of Augustine' s views on infant salvation
Augustine on prebaptismal condition of unregenerate infants
To the aged Augustine unbaptized infants seemed condemned to hell
Augustine versus Pelagius on punishability of infants
Augustine' s last baptismal view was overreaction to Pelagius
A limbo for unbaptized babies firmly repudiated by Augustine
According to Augustine Jesus repudiated limbo in John 14:1-6
Augustine on grace given to the children of unbelievers
Sober assessment of Augustine on infant salvation
Summary of the Early Church' s teaching on infant salvation

V. THE DEFORMED CHURCH ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

The Pelagian denial of the inheritance of original sin
Eastern/Western teaching on infant salvation after Augustine
The dreadful doctrine of infant damnation in Mediaeval Church
The baptismal reaction of Rome to the Pre-Reformers
Rome on infant damnation at the time of the Reformation
Modern Romish discussions on the damnation of infants
Wycliffe on salvation of unbaptized early-dying infants
Summary of Deformed Church' s teaching on infant salvation

VI. THE REFORMATION ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

Luther on the position of unbaptized infants
The Great Commission requires infant baptism (thus Luther)
Infant salvation in "Unvaried" 1530 *Augsburg Confession*
Melancthon' s 1540 "*Varied Augsburg Confession*"
Classic Lutheranism on salvation of the infants of heathen
Gnesio-Lutheranism on infant baptism and salvation
Infant salvation in the view of some of the later Lutherans
Ulrich Zwingli on the salvation of all early-dying infants
Zwingli' s righteous hatred of baptismal regenerationism

Salvation of early-dying infants: Bullinger and Musculus
Summary of Early Reformation' s teaching on infant salvation

VII. JOHN CALVIN ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

Calvin on the congenital stain of original sin before Noah' s flood
Calvin on the adult-erous wickedness of man at the deluge
Calvin: original sin from Noah' s flood till Sodom' s destruction
Calvin: adult-erous Sodom (not its infants) punished for ever
Calvin on original sin - from Sodom' s incineration till Esau' s destruction
Calvin, like Job, never said God sent pagan babies to hell forever
Calvin on spared children of Ninevites in the Book of Jonah
Calvin: wicked Nineveh' s babies did not merit destruction
Calvin on ' safeness' of trustful babies at Isaiah 1f:8
Calvin on the children of the wicked in the Book of Isaiah
Calvin: children at Isaiah 14:21 not babies but adolescents or adults
Calvin on the children of the wicked in the Book of Jeremiah
Calvin on the covenant children of the wicked in Ezekiel
Calvin on infant redemption in the Minor Prophets
Calvin on being born again even when first coming into the World
Calvin on the lifted-up Christ saving ' whosoever trusts Him' in John 3:14-16
Calvin on Christ' s saving the World in John 3:17-21
Calvin: infants exempt from God' s abiding wrath in John 3:36
Calvin on punishment of ignorant adults with fewer stripes
Calvin on Christ healing the daughter of the Canaanite woman
Calvin on Christ seeking and saving infants that were lost
Calvin' s repeated denials of justificatory need for baptism
Calvin on the wrath and mercy of God in Romans chapters one to four
Calvin on the wrath and grace of God in Romans chapter five
Calvin on the bearing of Romans chapter five on infant salvation
Calvin on triumph of grace in Romans chapters six to nine
Calvin on the root and the fruits in Romans eleven
Calvin on the ' unclean' children in First Corinthians 7:14
Calvin on ' all' being made alive in First Corinthians 15:21f
Calvin on ' the children of disobedience' in Ephesians 2:2f
Calvin: in Hebrews 2:13 Christ' s incarnation destroys Satan
Calvin: I John 3:7f tells tiny children the devil' s works are destroyed
Calvin: children saved before and without infant baptism
Calvin versus the sacramentology of the Gnesio-Lutheran Joachim Westphal
Calvin versus the sacramentology of the Gnesio-Lutheran Tilemann Heshusius
Calvin: children tainted but not necessarily unregenerate
Calvin: the transmission of original sin cannot stop infants being regenerated
Did Calvin believe all or any early-dying infants of pagans go to hell?
Calvin never says reprobate infants die while still babies
Calvin: impiety of parents not a bar to salvation of their infants
Calvin condemns the Anabaptist Servetus for damning early-dying infants
Calvin' s view that paedobaptism seals infant salvation
Calvin condemns Castellio on the subject of infant damnation
Also the Synod of Dordt would later uphold Calvin against Castellio
Summary of John Calvin' s teaching on infant salvation

VIII. CHURCH AFTER CALVIN ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

The ' Early Protestant' Anglican Church on infant salvation
The Anglicans Becon and Blunt on the salvation of the infants of heathen
The ' Early Calvinist Confessions' on infant salvation
The Moderator of the 1643f Westminster Assembly on infant salvation
The *Westminster Confession* on infant salvation
Commentaries on the *Westminster Confession* chapter 10:3 - I
Commentaries on the *Westminster Confession* chapter 10:3 - II
Manton: Hebrews 11:6 implies that also infants need to believe
Owen: early-dying infants are justified by regeneration
Owen repudiates the Arminians' "faithless infants' salvation"
Wigglesworth: early-dying infants of unbelievers are lost forever
Calvinism also from Doddridge onward stressed universal infant salvation
Matthew Henry: Jonah three' s salvation of early-dying babies
Matthew Henry: those in Jonah four who "do not know their right hand" are infants
Matthew Henry: not God' s will that any infant should perish (in Matthew 18:1-14)
Wesleyan Semi-Arminianism: salvation of early-dying infants
Also the "Rock of Ages" Calvinist Toplady champions universal infant salvation
Newton, Beecher and Scott: all early-dying infants are saved
Summary of the Post-Calvinian Church on infant salvation

IX. 19TH-CENTURY CHURCH ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

Princeton always held to the salvation of all dying in infancy
Rev. Dr. William Harris: all that die in infancy are saved
Rev. Dr. David Russell: universal salvation of dying infants
Rev. Drs. Bethune and Bockok on the salvation of early-dying infants
Rev. Professor Dr. Charles Hodge on the salvation of all early-dying infants
Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge: all early-dying infants are saved
Rev. Professor Dr. R.S. Candlish: all early-dying infants are elect
Rev. Professor Dr. R.L. Dabney on the salvation of those dying in infancy
Rev. Professor Dr. W.GT. Shedd on infant salvation
Rev. Dr. H.J. van Dyke and Rev. Professor Dr. H. Bavinck on infant salvation
Rev. Professor Dr. A. Kuyper Sr. on infant salvation
Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Girardeau: all early-dying infants are saved
Should we ever have any *Declaratory Statement* anent the *Confession*?
The background of the 1882 *Victorian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement*
Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Rentoul: all dying in infancy are saved
Dr. Rentoul and Dr. Calvin on salvation of those dying in infancy
The 1882 *Declaratory Statement* of the Victorian Presbyterian Church
Summary of the Nineteenth-Century Church on infant salvation

X. 20TH-CENTURY CHURCH ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

The 1901 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*
The 1903 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*
Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield: salvation for all dying in infancy
Warfield: all dying in infancy were elected unto everlasting life
Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green Fairchild: dying infants are elect
Rev. Dr. M' Conoughty' *Are Infants Saved?* and W.E. Schenck' *Children in Heaven*
Rev. Professor Dr. R.A. Webb' s *Calvin Memorial Addresses*

Rev. Professor Dr. R.A. Webb' s 1907*Theology of Infant Salvation*
 Inconsistent views of modern Baptists anent infant salvation
 Baptist Rev. Professor Dr. A.H. Strong: babies regenerated before getting to Heaven
 Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff: the Early Church assumed infant salvation
 Rev. Professor Dr. Schaff' s personal view: all dying in infancy are saved
 Rev. Dr. Stagg : Calvin, Twisse and Edwards on the Universal Salvation of Dying Infants
 Presbyterian Rev. Luther Link: all dying in infancy are saved
 Presbyterian Luther Link on infant salvation (continued)
 Rev. Dr. Samuel G. Craig: salvation for all dying infants
 Professor Dr. Loraine Boettner: all dying infants were elected
 Rev. Professor Dr. L.B. Schenck' s *Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant*
 Rev. Dr. D.J. De Groot: ungodly Jeroboam' s dying child was saved
 Rev. Professor Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr. on the salvation of all dying in infancy
 Baptist Rev. D. Kingdon: all dying babies seem unregenerate
 1992 Australians on everlasting destination of early-dying children
 Summary of the Twentieth-Century Church on infant salvation

XI. OUR OWN VIEW ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Nigel Lee on the everlasting destiny of early-dying children
 Lee on Articles I & II in the *Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement*
 Lee on infants in Articles III-IV in the *Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement*
 Lee: ' liberty of opinion' e infants in the *Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement*
 Lee on the *Australian [Ordination] Formula* regarding infants
 Lee on the everlasting destiny of aborted and miscarried fetuses
 Summary of own view on the salvation of early-dying infants

XII. SUMMARY: CAN BABIES OF LOST INFIDELS THEMSELVES BELIEVE?

The Old Testament on the early-dying infants of infidels
 The New Testament on the early-dying infants of infidels
 The Pre-Reformed Church on the early-dying infants of infidels
 The Reformers on the early-dying infants of infidels
 Westminster & thereafter on early-dying infants of infidels
 The twentieth century Church on the early-dying infants of infidels
 Conclusions on the early-dying infants of infidels

VARIOUS VERY IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL APPENDICES

(Note: After the Endnotes, the page numbers referred to in the Indexes are those of our 224-page first edition)

Endnotes
 Index of Bible texts cited
 Index of Biblical Persons cited
 Index of Other Persons cited
 Index of Subjects cited
 Select Bibliography
 Biographical Profile of Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Nigel Lee

INTRODUCTION

It is well known that Mediaeval Romanism clearly taught that no early-dying unbaptized infant could possibly inherit everlasting life. Such were deemed either to go to a very slight degree of everlasting punishment in hell, or otherwise to go to everlasting limbo where at best they would have a joyless and a painless existence at but nevertheless outside the gates of glory.

Now the Bible teaches baptism has come in the place of circumcision. Colossians 2:11-13. In Genesis 17:14, God Himself declared: "Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from His people; he has broken My covenant. Here, the explanation of this text by Martin Luther and Primitive Lutheranism - is very illuminating.

"Some declare," states Dr. Luther, "that Moses is speaking of a civil cutting-off.... But this interpretation is wrong.... The words must be understood of a cutting-off from the Church.... The Gentiles are excluded from circumcision. They are nevertheless not excluded from the blessing - **if they believe**, with faithful Abraham....

"If the Jews...sighted circumcision, they ceased to be the People of God...and their reward was hell and its fire.... This statement...does **not** involve **infants** who died before the eighth day. Even although they have original sin - a merciful God will nevertheless find a way to deliver them....

"One must have the same opinion about the little boys who were not circumcised either because of the carelessness or the wickedness of their parents, just as today there are some who are not baptized.... Such little children should be committed to the dispensation of the goodness of God. For what guilt against this law have the little children, who either die or are neglected by ungodly parents? Therefore they should be left to the goodness of God, and should not be condemned as the Scholastics have condemned them." Luther: *Commentary on Genesis* 17:14.

There can be no question that Calvinism teaches that the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to all of his descendants, regardless of their age. In Deuteronomy 32:23-25, God Himself clearly states: "I will heap mischiefs upon them.... Terror within shall destroy both the young man, and the virgin; also the suckling, together with the man of gray hairs."

In his *Sermons on Deuteronomy* (32:23-25), Calvin clearly teaches: "As concerning that which is said here of babes, let us mark that if God wished to rend up the whole world by the roots - He could do it. Yes, and that rightly justly. For even from our very birth, we bring nothing but wrath and cursedness. If God take young babes out of the world, yes, and damns them - yet is there no rigour in so doing. For we be all forlorn, aforehand, by nature.... He did no wrong or injury to little infants, in taking them out of the world.... He may not only smite them with death, but also send them to everlasting damnation - because we be all cursed in Adam....

"Not that the children be punished, as if guiltless. For God knows that they be not so.... We do not perceive that they have offended.... Although **we** [sometimes] take little babes to be faultless - yet, notwithstanding, there is a naughtiness enclosed in them. And the seed of sin is sufficient to condemn them before God....

“Although He roots out young babes, yet in so doing He cannot be blamed of cruelty. But He executes a judgment which surmounts the capacity and measure of man’s wit.... We must confess it to be rightful, as it is indeed. We see how it fell out both in Sodom and in other places where it was His will to have all destroyed....

‘Behold, the little infants whom we imagine to be innocent and faultless! And yet we see that God’s vengeance wraps them in with the elder sort, and with those who have **greatly** offended.’” Thus Calvin - speaking, it seems, of the physical death and destruction of those dying in infancy, rather than of their everlasting destination thereafter (about which later).

Many have died as infants. Especially before the advances in medicine vastly reduced the infant mortality rate only about a century ago. Such as die thus, ultimately do so because of the results of Adam’s sin imputed also to them. Indeed, the only hope for such who die so young - is that God in His mercy remove their guilt before they die.

Can one, then, be born again - before one is born? Can the tiny baby (even of two faithless parents) personally trust the Triune God, and thus savingly believe in Jesus Christ - even before birth?

Stained with Adam’ s sin from his or her very conception onward, every baby of unbelieving parents is clearly unclean. First Corinthians 7:14. However, does this mean that he or she should also be regarded as lost - if dying during infancy? Or could he or she possibly still be elect - and indeed also be brought to personal faith in Christ, by the sovereign grace of God, before premature death?

Not only the babies of unbelievers but also those of believers are tarnished even at their very conception. The godly Job, perfect and upright, declared: "Who can bring forth that which is clean - from that which is unclean?..."

"What is man, that he should be clean; and he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" So then: "How then can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean, who has been born of a woman?" Job 1:1-8; 14:4; 15:14f; 25:4.

David was not only the godliest king Israel ever had. He was also raised in a godly home. Yet he too declared: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

However, that same David also confessed to God: "You are He Who took me from the womb. You made me hope, when I was upon my mother’ s breasts. I was cast upon You - from the womb. You are my God - from my mother’ s belly." Psalms 51:5 and 22:9-10.

* * * * *

Apparently following the maverick misunderstandings of that eccentric hypercalvinist Michael Wigglesworth, a former friend of the writer of this dissertation - a man who was once a Baptist Minister - took the view that all children should be regarded as unregenerate, until they are able to (and indeed actually do) profess their faith in Christ. Until that happens - my former friend regarded the children even of Christians as lost and on their way to hell.

Another Baptist acquaintance of mine, Rev. David Kingdon (author of the book *Children of Abraham*), was in that book clearly agnostic about the everlasting destiny of early-dying infants even of believing parents. About the children of unbelievers, he was even more pessimistic.

Nevertheless, others are totally non-committal as to the everlasting destination of the early-dying children of both believers and unbelievers. This view in particular can be very depressing. For it certainly tends to inhibit all serious theological reflection on the subject.

* * * * *

Yet the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (10:3) cheerfully declares that "elect infants - dying in infancy -- are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit." Second only to Scripture, that *Confession* is the 'Subordinate Standard' of all Presbyterian denominations everywhere.

Carefully, 'The Presbyterian Church of Australia' wisely declared in 1901 that "none are saved except through the mediation of Christ and by the grace of the Holy Spirit.... In accepting the *Subordinate Standard*, it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost."

Yet uncarefully, 'The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America' did "authoritatively declare" in 1903 that "Chapter X Section 3 of the *Confession of Faith*...is not to be regarded as teaching that any who die in infancy are lost." Unwisely, it then further went on to add: "We believe that all dying in infancy...are regenerated."

But, even after discarding all uncared formulations, further nagging questions still remain. Are the early-dying babies of a believing mother with an unbelieving spouse, themselves not saved - regardless of their father's unbelief?

Do early-dying infants of unbelieving mothers married to believing husbands, go to Heaven? May any dying babies go to Heaven, without personally believing in Jesus as Saviour?

Can the baby of two infidel parents himself or herself believe, while yet an infant (or even a fetus)? Indeed, are all, some, or no early-dying babies - ever lost?

In the following pages, we shall try to answer some of the above questions. First we shall ask, in the light of the Bible prooftexts cited in the *Westminster Confession*: "What does the Scripture say?" Romans 4:3. Then we shall enquire: What is the verdict of Church History?

We feel vindicated from even the most unlikely quarter of all. For, some time after submitting this revised edition of our own *Infant Salvation* to the bookbinder, we were edified indeed to read the following at the end of the 25th March 1995 Encyclical Letter *The Gospel of Life*. It was written by that inveterate advocate of limbo-for-all-unbaptized-babies - that dour baptismal regenerationist, Pope John Paul II.

That present pope gave this "special word to women who have had an abortion.... Certainly what happened was and remains terribly wrong. But do not give in to discouragement.... If you have not already done so, give yourselves over with humility and trust to repentance.... You will come to understand that nothing is definitively lost.... Ask forgiveness from your child who is

now living in the Lord." This means that, at least to Pope John Paul II (if not also to all his predecessors), an ungodly mother's unbaptized abortee, is saved.

Thus says the present Pope. But the really important question is - does the Pope here agree with **Holy Scripture**, or not? This we will endeavour to answer, in the following pages.

I. INFANT DAMNATION: ARE ALL OR ANY DYING BABIES LOST?

Presbyterians and other Calvinists profess that God is **good** to **all** of His creatures - yes, even to Satan and his demons (for whom it is **good** that God has predestinated them to **hell**). If Satan had been left in heaven, or if he were to get re-admitted there - he would not only be very miserable there but also make all the others there similarly miserable. So God is good, even to Satan, also when excluding him from heaven for ever.

This is so, because God is **necessarily** good - even to the wicked. However, Presbyterians also profess that the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood for the justification not of angelic demons but only of elect human beings.

The latter is clearly the teaching of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.¹ But of far greater importance, it is also the doctrine of the infallible **Holy Scriptures**. Indeed, therefrom alone does the *Confession* claim to be derived.

What, however, of the doctrine of damnation - in relation to that of salvation? Here, we shall first look at the Bible and Westminster - anent the damnation of all unregenerate sinners.

Then we shall go on to note the *Westminster Standards* on the election of infants. Finally, we shall examine the Bible regarding faith in Christ within elect infants at the time they prematurely die.

The Bible and the Westminster Confession on the damnation of all unregenerate sinners

According to the Holy Bible, because of the fall of Lucifer together with such angels as then followed him - they then became Satan and his demons. Significantly, they thus all became condemned or damned for ever. Indeed, this had been predestinated - even from all eternity. For the Lord has made even the wicked for the day of evil. And known unto God are all His works, from the beginning of the World. Proverbs 16:4 *cf.* Acts 15:18.

Jesus says that everlasting fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels. Matthew 25:41. Peter explains that God did not spare the angels which sinned, but cast them down to hell. Second Peter 2:4. Indeed, Jude adds that the Lord reserves the angels which did not keep their first estate -- for everlasting chains. Jude 6. Yet Paul insists that the other spirits which did keep their first estate, are indeed "elect angels." First Timothy 5:21.

Sacred Scripture makes plain it is not because of the above-mentioned and prior fall of angels but only because of the later fall of Adam - that the latter and all his descendants deserve to be damned. God told the unfallen Adam and Eve to multiply - but also made it clear that they and their descendants would die, if they disobeyed Him. Genesis 1:27f; 2:17f; 3:2f; 3:14f.

They did. Consequently, the guilt of Adam's first sin now taints all of his descendants even from their very conception onward. Compare Job 14:1-4; 15:14-16; 25:4-6; Psalm 51:4-5.

Through Adam's first sin, all human beings now die. Romans 5:12-19. Indeed, in Adam, all transgress and all die. Compare Hosea 6:7f & First Corinthians 15:21f. Moreover, human death - unless timeously reversed -- necessarily produces an ongoing postmortal state of everlasting torment under the wrath of God. Daniel 12:2f; John 3:36; 5:29; Revelation 14:10f; 20:10-15; 21:8; 22:14f.

Yet the Bible nowhere declares that any human beings who expire during infancy - are lost eternally. To be sure, infants conceived from two unbelieving parents are indeed said to be "unclean" - but they are not said to be uncleanable (then or later). First Corinthians 7:14.

Now God indeed fore-ordained Esau unto everlasting damnation before he was born (and even from all eternity past). Yet it is also so that God eternally fore-ordained him not to die until after he had grown up into a wicked adult - and not to die while still a baby. Malachi 1:2-4 & Romans 9:10-22.

Indeed, it is significant that God **never told Esau's parents** - that He had, from all eternity, reprobated that son of theirs to hell. That is something which God **only later revealed**.

On the other hand, the Bible insists that all who are saved - even if dying while babies - first need to believe. Luke 1:41f; Hebrews 11:6; First John 5:12. For God sent His Son not to condemn the World, but so that it through and **by faith in Him** might be saved. John 3:17.

Whosoever has been born again, including babies, believes in Jesus -- and can never perish. John 1:9-13 & 3:3-17. The Son of man came to save that which was lost; therefore it is not the will of the Father that even one of the little children who believe in Jesus should perish. Elect dying infants have but a little faith, but faith in Christ they have. Matthew 18:2-14.

States the *Westminster Confession*:² "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life - and others [for reasons which He regards as very good] foreordained to everlasting death. First Timothy 5:21; Matthew 25:41; Romans 9:22f; Ephesians 1:5f; Proverbs 16:4." Further: "Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved - but the elect only. John 6:64f; 10:26; 8:47; 17:9; Romans 8:28; First John 2:19."

Why, then, did the Lord fore-ordain any human beings unto everlasting destruction? States the *Westminster Confession*:³ "Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned.... This their sin God was pleased...to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory."

So: "By this sin, they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God.... They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed - and the same death in sin and corrupted nature [was] conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. Genesis 1:27f; 2:16f; 5:31; Job 14:4; 15:14; Psalm 51:4-5; Acts 17:26; Romans 5:12-19; First Corinthians 15:21f,45f."

The above, then, is the doctrine of damnation from all eternity, as gloriously contained in the *Westminster Confession*. It is grounded in Jehovah's eternal decree; it focusses on the fall of

Adam; and it purposes to manifest the glory of God. Yet, throughout - the *Westminster Confession* never once either asserts or implies that any **dying during infancy** are lost. Neither should anyone who professes to subscribe to it!

The Westminster Confession on the election of infants

The above introduces the matter of the **solidarity** of parents with their descendants. It involves the staining of all of Adam's descendants, from their very conception onward, with the guilt of Adam's own first sin.

Yet it also anticipates a further discussion of the gracious imputation of the righteousness of the Second Adam Jesus Christ to as many as believe in Him. As shall be seen, many also includes especially the infants of a vast number of adults.

Now as the *Westminster Confession* explains:⁴ "All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased in His appointed and accepted time effectually to call by His Word and Spirit out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. Romans 8:2; Ephesians 2:2-5; Second Timothy 1:[3-8 &] 9-10.... Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth. Luke 18:15f; Acts 2:38f; 4:12; John 3:3-8; First John 5:12; Romans 8:9."

This implies that "elect infants dying in infancy" are priorly given **faith in Christ**. Hence the *Westminster Confession* continues:⁵ "The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts. Second Corinthians 4:13; Ephesians 1:17f & 2:8....

"By the administration of the **sacraments** and prayer, it [faith] is **increased** and strengthened. First Peter 2:2; Acts 20:32; Romans 4:11.... This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong. It may indeed often be assailed, but gets the victory - **growing up** in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ. Hebrews 5:13f & 10:22."

The Bible on faith within early-dying elect infants

Of the just-mentioned Bible passages - four are especially important anent faith within elect babies. They are First Peter 2:2; Romans 4:11; Hebrews 5:13f; and Hebrews 10:22.

These verses - addressed to the earthly children of God - respectively teach: "As new-born babies, keep on desiring the sincere milk of the Word so that you may grow thereby!" For Abraham the father of those who believe in Jesus, himself "received the sign of circumcision [as] a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while yet being uncircumcised."

Accordingly, infant circumcision was replaced at Calvary by infant baptism (Colossians 2:11f). Yet even after receiving the latter "every one that keeps on needing milk is unskilful in the Word of righteousness; for he is a baby."

Therefore, even after infancy: "Let us **keep on drawing near** with a true heart in full assurance of faith. For thus we have **had** our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience - having **had** our bodies washed with pure water."

Now, according to the *Westminster Confession*, "God gave to Adam a Law as a covenant of works - by which He bound him and **all his posterity** to personal, entire, exact and **perpetual obedience**; [and] promised life upon the fulfilling and threatened death upon the breach of it. Genesis 1:26f & 2:17; Romans 2:14f & 5:12-19; Galatians 3:10; etc."⁶

So,⁷ also "the catholick or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect - that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof.... The visible church, which is also catholick or universal..., consists of all those throughout the world that **profess** the true religion [of Christ and His Word], **together with their children**. First Corinthians 7:14; Acts 2:39; Ezekiel 16:20f; Romans 11:16; Genesis 3:15; 17:7....

"Unto this catholick visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles and **ordinances** of God - for the **gathering** and perfection **of the saints**. Matthew 28:19f; Isaiah 59:21."

Among the above-mentioned "ordinances" of the visible church, is holy baptism. Now here, continues the *Westminster Confession*,⁸ "not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized. Genesis 17:7f; Galatians 3:9f; Colossians 2:11f; Acts 2:38f; Romans 4:11f; First Corinthians 7:14; Matthew 28:19; Mark 10:13f; Luke 18:15."

This means, as also the *Westminster Larger Catechism* clearly explains,⁹ "baptism is not to be administered to any that are out[side] of the visible church and so **strangers** from the covenant of promise till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him. But infants descending from parents, either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ and obedience to Him - are in that respect within the covenant, and to be baptized. [Genesis 17;] Acts 8:36f & 2:38f; First Corinthians 7:14"; *etc.*

Consideration of the last-mentioned verse brings us right into our subject. For First Corinthians 7:14 clearly implies that the children of two unbelieving spouses are not holy, but "unclean."

Now exactly what does this word "unclean" here mean? It certainly does not mean that such children are unjustifiable. Does it then necessarily imply that they could not possibly have been justified - yet?

Without faith, it is indeed impossible to please God. Thus, Hebrews 11:6. Yet faith is a fruit of regeneration. John 1:9-13 & 3:3-18.

Jesus states in Matthew 18:1-14 that even babies can believe (*viz.* through the sovereign work of God the Holy Spirit within such babies). Thus, also according to the *Westminster Confession* (10:3), "elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit - Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth. Luke 18:15f & John 3:8."

Summary on infant damnation in the Bible and the *Westminster Confession*

Here we can be very short. Certainly both the Holy Bible and the *Westminster Confession* clearly teach that apart from Christ's coming to save His elect, also fallen infants **are lost**.

Accordingly, both infants and especially adults - in themselves - indeed **deserve** at least some degree of everlasting damnation in hell. *Inter alia*, this is so because of the imputation to them - at their very conception - of the guilt of their federal father Adam's eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree.

Yet neither Holy Scripture nor the *Westminster Confession* anywhere suggest that any dying in infancy have **remained lost**. As many as God **redeems** before their death, whether in infancy or thereafter, are certainly **saved**.

All early-dying infants of believing adults, are **certainly** among the elect. According to the Holy Scriptures, the same is true of at least some and possibly of all the early-dying infants even of unbelievers. And this we shall seek to demonstrate, in the pages below.

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this chapter on the Old Testament's teaching anent the salvation of early-dying infants, we shall first look at the situation right before and also immediately after the fall of the angels and of man. We shall then discount unsubstantiated claims that all children of infidels are saved automatically. Yet we shall also ask if fallen infants are permanently lost - as indeed are the fallen angels.

We then enquire if the infants who drowned in the great flood, and thereafter the children of Ham, were lost or saved. Noting the godly Non-Abramite Melchizedek and the ungodly adults of Sodom and Shechem, we will then ask whether also their infants were lost. Next, we look at inherited sin and the availability of salvation among prenatally-dying infants - in the book of Job.

Then we shall consider the infants of the ungodly at the exodus and thereafter; the children of the obnoxious Midianites; and the exterminating of whole nations like the Amelekites. We shall next note the "good thing" in Abijah the son of the wicked Jeroboam; the children saved by Elijah and Elisha; the little Ninevites in Jonah; and Isaiah's prophecies regarding babies. We shall next take a look at the "innocents" in the prophecies of Jeremiah. We shall note Ezekiel on God's tiny children born to ungodly parents. We shall ask whether the Psalmist indeed encourages dashing babies against stones. Finally, we shall see some post-exilic examples of mercy being extended to the babies even of ungodly parents.

Before and after the fall of the angels and of man

Before the fall of some of them, all of the angels were just. They would have remained so, if their fall had never occurred. Before the fall of man, Adam and Eve were just.¹⁰ Had they not fallen, they would have remained thus. So too would all of their descendants.

After the fall of man and human death as its result, humanity became totally depraved and estranged from God - even from the womb.¹¹ If dying unregenerate, he remains totally depraved and estranged for ever - even beyond the tomb.¹²

This means that after man's fall, even all fetuses and babies were lost. Indeed, all of them would have remained lost - had God the Son not right then returned to the garden and promised later to become man and Himself to justify His elect - and had the Father and the Son not then sent the Spirit, even in Eden, to bring God's fallen elect back to faith in Him. Genesis 3:8-15 *cf.* 4:1-4 with Hebrews 11:1-6.

It is clear that Jesus Christ died to save believers and such of their children as die in infancy. The question is: Did He die to save also such children of infidels as die while yet babies? In other words, while all children of believers who die during infancy are indeed elect - are any children of unbelievers who die during infancy, also elect?

We can be quite certain about the salvation of those adults who die converted. Acts 2:21 & Romans 10:9. We can also be quite certain about the salvation of the early-dying infants of believers. Compare: Second Samuel 12:14-23; Romans 11:16; First Corinthians 7:14.

However, the adult who dies unconverted - is lost. See Luke 12:48 & Romans 2:12-14. Yet what about his early-dying infants?

Are the latter also lost? If so, is it all of them; or only some of them? Or are they saved, just like all the early-dying infants of believers? If so, because all babies could die any second - on what basis are infants of professing believers to be baptized, but not also the infants of open infidels?

Unsubstantiable claims that all children of infidels are saved

The Rev. Dr. Adrio König is Professor of Systematic Theology in the Faculty of Divinity at the famous University of South Africa in Pretoria. That institution - UNISA - is by far the largest fully-accredited and internationally-recognized ' correspondence university' in the world.

König seems to be at least a hypothetical universalist. For he has labelled the **new Dutch Reformed Baptismal Formula** as "strange"¹³ - at the place where it mentions¹⁴ that "Christ **shed** His blood **also** for the **children of believers**" (and not just for believing adults).

However, according to Professor Dr. Adrio König¹⁵ Christ did not die to redeem only believers and their children. To the contrary, Jesus "shed His blood for the **World**; certainly **also for the children of the heathen**." Emphasis mine - F.N. Lee.

Now König does not here restrict himself to the **early-dying** infants of infidels. He clearly says "the children of heathen" - with no age limit!

Hence, when those children grow older, they are apparently still saved - at least, so it would seem, to König. To him, it would appear, even "the World" itself seems to have been saved already - by the shed blood of Jesus.

We ourselves would rather not make such a categorical pronouncement one way or the other about so weighty a matter. Obviously, the question anent the salvation or the everlasting damnation especially of any early-dying infant, is extremely delicate.

However, the Roman Catholic Church has traditionally taught that all unbaptized babies forfeit salvation.¹⁶ Many modern (Ana)Baptists teach that all little babies without exception are saved - without baptism.¹⁷ Yet some allege that those dying during infancy, are unregeneratable. So, also Calvinists dare not be silent!

We need to give an account of the salvation or non-salvation of the early-dying children of unbelievers. So, first of all, we need to ask: "What does Scripture say?"¹⁸

Are fallen infants permanently lost like the fallen angels?

There is no doubt that the angels that fell into sin are permanently lost. Their leader became Satan, who also succeeded in derailing our first parents. God Himself then said **to Satan**: "You

are cursed.... You shall eat dust all the days of your life.... I shall put hatred between you and the woman, and between **your seed** and **her seed**. He shall crush your skull!"¹⁹

Now quite regardless whether the expression "your seed" here be taken to describe the demons which followed Satan, or alternatively all reprobate humans who follow him - or both - it is clear there is **no salvation for Satan's seed**. It seems that "**your seed**" (the seed of Satan) would also certainly include reprobate babies.

By the latter, we do not mean such lost babies as might die during their infancy. We mean such lost babies as God has predestinated to die as adult reprobates.

On the other hand, the expression "**her seed**" here probably includes not only "**the Seed**" Jesus the Messiah - but also (because of Him) all **the elect "seed" of the woman**. That includes those already elect, from all eternity, even while they are yet infants.²⁰ Of course, to say with Scripture (in Romans 9:9-13) that some other babies are reprobate - is **quite** different from the extra-biblical notion that any of these reprobates **die** during infancy.

However, the plain fact is that all human beings started to die - the moment Adam their federal forefather himself started to die.²¹ The whole of mankind, from the womb till the tomb, then became totally depraved. So then human "death, by [human] sin...passed upon all human beings. For all have sinned" - in Adam, and like Adam.²²

"By one man's offence, death reigned²³ - yes, even in the lives of the infants of that one man Adam. "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Indeed, "by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners"²⁴ - even all infants. It is in infancy too that very many sinners die. For also then: "the wages of sin, is death."²⁵

The plain fact is this. All of Adam's descendants, precisely through the imputation of his fall, and indeed from quite the very moment of their own conception onward - have become "dead in trespasses and sins." Thus, even they are certainly "the children of disobedience."²⁶

Formerly, even those who are now Christians "were by nature" - from their natural conception onward - "the children of wrath."²⁷ For they too, before they were regenerated, were the recipients of God's righteous anger toward them - because of their sins (both inherent and actual). They too were then "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance in them, because of the blindness of their heart."²⁸ Indeed, "unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure.... Even their mind and [also their very] conscience is defiled."²⁹

Thus, before begetting Abel and Seth who apparently grew up as godly believers - the fallen Adam first begat the fallen Cain (in his own fallen image).³⁰ The wicked Cain did the same, begetting children in his even more depraved image. When the latter grew up and produced children, they too did quite the same.

The adult Cain is stated to have been a child of the devil. First John 3:8-12. The mature Cain sinfully slew his godly brother Abel. See Matthew 23:35 & Hebrews 11:4. Later, the ungodly daughters and also the granddaughters of the Cainites were intermarrying with the sons of Seth (alias the covenant children of God).

Their children, in turn, became even more morally depraved. Thus, and soon, the whole world became filled with unbelief. All who died in infancy, would therefore have died under the anger of God - **unless priorly born again** (alias regenerated).

Were the infants lost who drowned in the great flood?

Explains the inspired Moses:³¹ "It came to pass, when men began to multiply on the surface of the Earth and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were good-looking. So they took for themselves wives, from all those whom they chose. Then the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man. For he is only flesh.

"There were fallen ones on the Earth in those days, and also after that - when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men. Thus the latter bare children to the former. Those children then became the mighty men of old - men of notoriety!"

Then the Lord "God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the Earth... Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, continually."³² Thus the whole Earth became corrupt. Indeed, "all flesh had corrupted its way upon the Earth."

God Himself said: "The Earth is filled with violence!"³³ So God sent His great flood. That drowned everyone to death - except Noah and his family inside the ark.³⁴

Even all the little babies of wicked parents were drowned in the great flood.³⁵ Yet this not necessarily implies that those babies thereafter spent eternity in hell. Still less would it place them in a mythical limbo (as does Romanism). After all, it was not those infants themselves, but their wicked parents who were "the mighty men of notoriety" - and it was not the infants themselves but their backslidden male ancestors who had gone and intermarried with the seductive daughters of men and filled the Earth with immorality and violence. Genesis 6:1-12.

It is altogether conceivable that even some of the adult-erous adults themselves may very well have been justified - soon before drowning to death in the great flood. For after all, Noah had preached the Gospel to the ungodly (and to their children) before that flood. Compare here: First Peter 1:10-12 & 3:18-22 & 4:6 with Second Peter 2:5. So some of those outside the ark may well have been saved right before they drowned - just like the penitent thief on the cross.

Yet, even after the flood - original sin kept on being transmitted at conception. Consequently, human depravity remained. Thus also then, God again said:³⁶ "The human heart is evil from its youth" - alias even from his very infancy onward.

Ham and his children - lost or saved?

Now all **covenant** children are to be presumed holy - that is, deemed to be already sanctified - even when still tiny. This presumption should continue also when they get older - unless and until the contrary might become evident. Yet no covenant children (nor any covenant adults) can irrefutably or irrebuttably be presumed regenerate.

True, God indeed made His covenant with Noah and his whole household. The Lord preserved them all from, and during, the great flood. Yet Noah's adult son Ham later sinned hideously. When that occurred, Noah himself (apparently as a Spirit-inspired predictive prophet) cursed Ham's son Canaan - and apparently also even some of the latter's descendants.

However, Ham himself - as well as Ham's **other** sons - were not so cursed. Nor was even Canaan - who himself may very well actively have encouraged his father Ham in the latter's transgression, and himself perhaps even have approved of Ham's hideous sin - necessarily cursed beyond redemption. For beyond Canaan's own enslavement (and apparently also that of Canaan's descendants) to Shem and to Japheth, nothing is said about Canaan as regards his own everlasting destination.

Still less is anything said about the everlasting destination of the many descendants of Canaan. Significantly, however, the Hamitic eunuch of Ethiopia later embraced Christianity - before many a Japhethite did.³⁷

Now it could be argued that Ham and even the cursed Canaan himself (as distinct from the later Canaanites *etc.*) still remained inside the covenant which the Lord God had erected with their immediate ancestor Noah and his whole household before they had all entered into the ark. Indeed, this may even very well have remained the case - at least unto the third and fourth generation.³⁸

On the other hand, we must never forget the cases of later persons who - through the neglect of their more immediate ancestors - were clearly outside the **visible** covenant. However, at least some - even of **them** - were nevertheless saved.

The godly Melchizedek - and the ungodly adults of Sodom

We should also remind ourselves about Melchizedek - that godly though extra-covenantal type of Christ.³⁹ Further, we should also consider the election from eternity - and thus even before they were adopted into his household - of **babies** of those many unbelievers who became Abraham's household slaves.⁴⁰ Indeed, we should observe that God **would** have spared also the **inhabitants** in the non-Abrahamic **cities** of Sodom and Gomorrah at least from physical destruction in this present world - even if **only ten righteous** (adult) persons could have been found therein.⁴¹

God had told Abraham that He Himself would destroy those wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham then asked: "Do you wish to destroy the righteous also, together with the wicked? ... Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?" So God replied He would spare that place - even if only ten "righteous" persons were there in Gomorrah and Sodom.

However, not even ten "righteous" persons could be found in Sodom and Gomorrah. So, even the little babies of those unrighteous inhabitants subsequently died there - together with their wicked parents. Obviously, even the infants were incinerated together with their evil parents - at the incendiary destruction of "those cities; and all the plain; and all the inhabitants of the cities; and that which grew upon the ground."⁴²

At least "those cities" as such (*viz.* their buildings); and "all the plain" as such (as distinct from its human inhabitants); and all "that grew upon the ground" in Sodom and Gomorrah - were not subjected to everlasting torment in hell unto all eternity. We must therefore ask whether even the early-dying **babies** of the Sodomites were themselves infantly tormented - and are even now still being tormented - in hell eternally.

The above-mentioned everlasting destination of Sodom's babies is not discussed. Their being postmortally consigned to hell for ever, is neither stated nor implied.

It is true the Holy Scriptures specifically state that the impenitent (adult) sodomizing Sodomites - in clear contradistinction to their own early-dying children - would themselves indeed spend eternity in hell.⁴³ Yet such is nowhere stated also of their infants. For no matter how much or often an adult-erous adult or a beast-like bestializer or a sodomizing sodomite may keep on sinning sexually by way of illicit intercourse - his children cannot possibly do so even once, while themselves yet infants.

Indeed, also when the adult male pagan Shechem seduced the Israelitess Dinah - her enraged brothers Simeon and Levi "slew all the males" of that Shechem's own city. Yet this phrase here clearly means only **adult** males. For we are also specifically told that Simeon and Levi did not exterminate the "little ones" - nor even the women of the city of Shechem.⁴⁴

We are never once told that none even of the slaughtered adult males of Shechem repented before they died. Nor are we told that all or even any of them necessarily ended up in hell. Still less is that claimed or even remotely implied anent their infants. Quite the contrary. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same applies also to the infants incinerated in Sodom.

Inherited sin and available salvation in the book of Job

Now Job was a very great prophet. See Job 1:21 & 19:25-27 *cf.* Ezekiel 14:14-20 and James 5:11. It is thus indeed significant that Job not only himself trusted in his redeeming *Gr̄ñ l* - but further certainly seems to have believed the Saviour would justify also all those who die while yet babies (and even prenatally). Job 3:1-19 & 19:25-27 *cf.* Revelation 14:13.

We really need to recall that even the uncircumcised Non-Israelite Job was indeed an upright God-fearer.⁴⁵ He thoroughly admitted having been tainted with original sin - ever since his very conception.⁴⁶ Yet also, he nevertheless professed that he himself did not (like Adam) cover his own transgressions and hide his iniquity in his bosom.⁴⁷ To the contrary. Job proclaimed that he was a sinner - and also, triumphantly, that he knew⁴⁸ his Redeemer lives!

Now Job attached much importance to birthdays as such - as well as to birthday anniversaries. See Job 1:4-5; 1:13; 1:21; 3:3. In Job 3:1-19, it is clear that the adult prophet Job (*cf.* James 5:11) well knew that he himself had existed not only from his own birthday onward. He knew he had existed also prenatally - even from the night of his own conception. Indeed, it is also clear from this same passage that the godly prophet Job believed that prenatally-dying infants go straight to a glorious **rest** - where they are **free** from oppressors and evil-doers.

Job 3:3 refers to the day Job was born, and even to the very night in which he was conceived nine months earlier. Job soon proceeds (in 3:11b) further to reflect even on the very time he came forth from the womb. Had he died at the time of his own birth - the godly Job explains (in 3:11a) - "**then** I would have...been **quiet**.... I would have been **at rest** with kings and counsellors who **rebuilt** ruins...or with princes who had **gold**."

Job then refers to the **intermediate** time between his conception and his birth. Thus, he next asks: "Why was I not as a hidden untimely birth [alias like a **prematurely**-born infant]?"

Job then further asks: "Why was I not...as infants who never see the light" - alias like babies who die **prenatally**? "There," he adds, "the wicked **cease** from **troubling**; and there, the weary are **at rest**...[and] **at ease**...[and] **free**."

From the above, we thus learn that the holy prophet Job knew he had existed from before the time of his own birth. Prophetically, he also knew that prematurely-dying infants go to glory.

There, free(d) from oppressors and evildoers - prenatally-dying infants thus go to a place where there are no evil-doers (such as abortionists *etc.*), and where those infants are then "**at rest**." Cf. Revelation 14:13.

On the above passage in Job, in his own *Eleventh Sermon on the Third Chapter of Job*, the great Reformer John Calvin comments:⁴⁹ "When God created us, He also printed His Own image in us and did us the honour to be the most excellent of all His creatures.... The very origin and solemnizing of birthdays was -- for the holy fathers knew it was [with] good reason - to yield God thanks...."

"When we have passed some years of our life, although we ought to call God's benefits to remembrance incessantly - yet it is requisite that at [the anniversary of] the day of our entrance into the World, there should be kept an everlasting memorial...so that we might say: I see well that this year is past; God has brought me hitherto. I have offended Him many ways, and therefore it is meet that I should now ask Him forgiveness. But above all things, He has showed me great favour. He has maintained me always in **hope** of the **salvation** that He **has** given me! "

One should bear in mind that even after the fall of man, also babies (although tarnished) are still tiny images of God. Genesis 1:26-28 & 5:1-4 & 9:1-7. Consequently, it is very significant that Calvin further explains: "It behooves us always to bless God upon our birthdays. And why? Forasmuch as God has set us here in this world to be His children.

"He has not put us forth as oxen and dogs, but as reasonable creatures that bear His image. And further, forasmuch as we be baptized in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that besides our creation - God has also moreover printed His mark upon us for an advantage, to the intent we should be as His dear friends, and be received into His Church" (Visible).

"Furthermore we have to mark also, that such as have children ought so to rejoice.... When men desire to have children, that desire is good."

The salvation even of prenatally-dying infants in the book of Job

Similarly, in his *Twelfth Sermon on the Third Chapter of Job*, Calvin even yet more relevantly comments: "It behooves us to consider that He has created us and put us into this World, imprinting His Own image in us, and giving us many tokens to know that **He takes us for His children**.... We should be His children, because He has printed His image in us....

"**If** we had no **hope** of the **second** life, what would become of us? And truly, our Lord's will is that the same should **abide** printed in the hearts of **all** men.... We see that although the heathen men were become brutish, yet notwithstanding they **retained** still some knowledge of the **second life** and of the immortality of the soul.... For God teaches us that after death there is a better life than this, and an everlasting heritage which He has prepared for those that are His and for those whom He has **chosen**....

"When men are come to the end of their race, God draws them back from hence beneath.... We cease not either to be in pain, or else to be in blessed **joy**, after that our souls are parted from our bodies.... The **children of God** are gathered up into **joy**.... The faithful, **resting** in Abraham's bosom, are already so far forth partakers of the said joy -- as they **know** that **God** is their **Father**....

"We see then how the **faithful** who are **departed** out of this World, are in **joy** with **God** - and do know that forasmuch as they be Christ's members, they cannot perish.... [From] Job's talk...we may gather some good and profitable lessons....

"He saith that kings and princes do build up desert places Furthermore, we see here how Job speaks of **little babes**.... We know that when the creature is **conceived** in the mother's womb, God breathes a soul into it -- and it is certain that it has in it the seed of life."

Yet, long after Job himself had become a believer, he felt miserable when he considered his previous conception. Job's friend Eliphaz then observed: "Man is born unto trouble."⁵⁰ Job himself agreed: "Man that is born of a woman is...full of trouble.... Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one!"⁵¹

Responded Eliphaz: "What is man, that he should be clean -- and he who has been born of a woman, that he should be righteous? ... Abominable and filthy is man!"⁵²

Nevertheless the faithful Job answered and said:⁵³ "The counsel of the wicked is far from me! How often the candle of the wicked is put out! And how often their destruction comes upon them!

"God distributes sorrows in His anger. They [the wicked] are like stubble before the wind, and like chaff that the storm carries away. God lays up his [the wicked person's] iniquity for his children. He rewards him -- and he shall know it!"

Asked Bildad:⁵⁴ "How then can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that has been born? ... The son of man...is a worm!"

Job agreed. Yet he also professed: "I know my Redeemer lives - and that He shall stand at the last day upon the Earth. And though after my skin-worms destroy this body - yet in my flesh I shall see God! Him I shall see for myself - even after my kidneys be consumed within me!"⁵⁵

As the world-famous nineteenth-century Lutheran Old-Testamentarian Rev. Professor Dr. Delitzsch states on Job 3:13f and 19:25f in his *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Job*: "Millionaires, **abortions** (vid. Ecclesiastes 6:3), and the **still-born** - all these are removed from the sufferings of this life in their quiet of the grave.... **In the grave**, all **en-joy** the **rest** they could not find here.... The Pilel *shaa^a:nan*...signifies perfect **freedom** from **care**....

"The character of Job's state of mind is that he looks for certain death.... He, however -- notwithstanding -- does not despair of God but...is more and more impelled...to[ward] the God of love, his future Redeemer.... The *Targum* translates I know that my Redeemer liveth, and hereafter His redemption will arise (become a reality) over the dust (into which I shall be dissolved), and after my skin is again made whole...this will happen; and from my flesh I shall again behold God! "

A great Hebrew and Old Testament Professor, the Presbyterian Dr. A.B. Davidson, has well commented on Job 3:13f & 19:25f (in his 1889 work *The Book of Job*). Explains Davidson: "The speaker" (*viz.* the adult Job while suffering under grievous tribulations) "wishes to indicate that instead of lying in squalor and being the contempt of the low-born race of men as he now is (ch. 30), if he had died he would have been in company of the great dead who played famous parts in life."

Continues Davidson: "Job desires even if possible a **deeper** death than to have **died when born** -- even the death of having been **dead-born**." Job adds: **Then would I] cease from troubling**. Explains Davidson: "That is probably not from troubling others - but from the unquiet of their own evil.... **Small** and **great** are **there**...alike **the same**."

Job later insists: [I know] **my Redeemer liveth!** This word *liveth* - Davidson explains - "means more than **is** [or] **exists**. Job uses the word in opposition to himself. He died, but his Redeemer lives after him. The term **Redeemer** (Hebrew *Goo^aeel*) is frequently used of God as the Deliverer of His people.... Job has in God a *Goo^aeel* Who liveth."

Job adds: I shall see God. Davidson elucidates: "The last words explain Who Job's Redeemer or *Goo^aeel* is, and Who He is Who remaineth or [Who] shall come after him - *viz.* God. After his [Job's] skin is destroyed and without his flesh, he shall see God.... Job began with expressing his assurance that he should see God; but as he proceeds, so vivid is his hope that it becomes almost reality."

Finally, the Calvinist Dr. W.B. Renkema states on Job 3:13f & 19:25f in his 1895 commentary *The Book of Job explained for the Church* (with a recommendatory introduction by the renowned Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Bavinck): "Job here mentions...the **little children** who **never saw the light of day**.... If I who am miserable, the [adult] Job wishes to say, had only **died** [as an **infant**] - I would have **enjoyed** the same **rest** as those who lived here on Earth, and lived **happily**.... Those who **died in faith**...also had peace and **salvation** after their death....

"In Revelation 14:13," continues Renkema, "it is said: **blessed**...be those who **die** in the **Lord** [so that they may **rest** from their labours] It appears to us that the **hope** of **everlasting life** gradually ripened in Job into a glorious **certainty**.... When death was before his eyes and he felt its cold hand, then -- under inspiration of the Holy Spirit - his faith flapped her wings. He lifted himself toward eternity and said, "I know my Redeemer lives! "

Putting Job 3:1-19 & 19:25-27 & Revelation 14:13 all together, then, it would certainly seem that **prenatally-dying infants** go to a place of **everlasting joy** where they are **at rest**. Thus, apparently, the French Reformer Calvin. So too, it seems, also the German Lutheran Delitzsch; the Scottish Presbyterian Davidson; and the Dutch Reformed Renkema.

The infants of the ungodly at the exodus and thereafter

Right before their exodus from Egypt, the Lord through Moses predicted to the people of Israel that "all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die." This would occur, Moses continued, so that you "may know how that the Lord puts a **difference** between the Egyptians and Israel."

Indeed, God would soon smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. That He would do, precisely while delivering the households of the Israelites.⁵⁶

The firstborn of the Egyptians (at least a few of whom must have been sucklings) were slain by the angel of death. Now this occurred precisely because their parents had neglected to bring them under the blood of the Passover lamb.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Scripture does not declare that any tiny little Egyptians were lost everlastingly.

Soon thereafter, at Sinai, God through Moses declared that the results of the sins of one's ancestors often trouble also their descendants. Thus sometimes, even the little babies of the wicked suffer and die on account of the sins especially of their immediate ancestors.

This occurs because of the results of sins committed by those indeed unfaithful parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. For God visits the iniquity of the fathers even unto the children of the third and fourth generation of those that hate Him. Yet He is also merciful to thousands of [generations of] them who love Him and keep His Commandments.⁵⁸

Even the children of Israel were punished, in the desert, because of the sins of their parents.⁵⁹ However, the "little ones" of backslidden if not apostate covenanters - because themselves still "little ones" at that time - then "had no knowledge between good and evil." Therefore, they themselves were not held responsible for those misdeeds of their fathers. Indeed, they were even allowed to enter into the promised land -- the type of Heaven itself - which promised land their parents missed out on.

However, what about "all the men" of the seditious Korah and Dathan and Abiram? For we read that they "and their houses" went "down quickly into the pit." This was when "the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up - and their houses, and all the persons that appertained to Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit.... The earth closed upon them; and they perished."⁶⁰

Yet we should note, very carefully, what actually happened - when God wiped out the rebellious Korah and Dathan and Abiram "and their houses and all the **men** that appertained to Korah."⁶¹ Strikingly, it seems "their wives and their sons and their little children"⁶² then merely stood by. For "notwithstanding, the **children** of Korah died not."⁶³

Children of the Midianites and other obnoxious nations

A little later, the Midianites - through their womenfolk - seduced many of the Israelites.⁶⁴ "So Moses spoke to the people, saying: Arm yourselves for war, and let them go against the Midianites! ... They warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses.... They slew all the males....

"Then Moses said to them: Have you saved **all** the women alive? Look, these caused the children of Israel - through the counsel of Balaam - to commit trespass against the Lord.... Now therefore, kill every male among the post-toddler children - and kill every woman that has known [alias had sexual intercourse with] a man by lying with him. However, keep alive for yourselves all of the female children that have not known a man by lying with him!"⁶⁵

Significantly, neither here nor elsewhere in Holy Scripture⁶⁶ is it stated that any of those concerned - would necessarily spend eternity in hell. Nor were such females as had not participated in the fornication - even ordered to be killed. To the contrary, they were to be spared. Nor is there any indication that infants, either male or female, were put to death.⁶⁷

Also Moses inspired instruction to the Israelites as to how to dispose of the inhabitants of the pagan cities they conquered - [**except** the utterly **abominable**] Amelekites,⁶⁸ Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites⁶⁹ - is full of instruction. In this matter, Moses makes a clear distinction between what to do with adults and what to do with children.

Declared Moses of each such pagan city:⁷⁰ "When the Lord your God has delivered it into your hands, you shall smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women and **the little ones** and the cattle...**you shall take to yourself**.... This is what you shall do unto all the cities which are **very far off** from you."

It should be noted that the women and the cattle, and especially the "little ones" alias the pre-pubescent children or *ha-taf* of these **far-off** cities -- were to be treated quite differently to the adult men thereof. For, by divine command, the women and children were excluded from being smitten. Only the mature males (of adult or arms-bearing age) were to be destroyed.

The same distinctions seem to have been drawn even within the ranks of the covenant people themselves. Thus Moses commanded the people of Israel to "take to themselves every **man** [or **iysh**] a lamb..., every man [**iysh**] according to **his** eating...when your **sons** [or **b'neeychem**] shall say to you What **do you** [**men** in contradistinction to us **sons**] intend by this service? "

Then the **men** of "Israel journeyed...to Succoth, about 600 000 on foot **beside** the **toddlers** [or **bad mittaaf**].... When a stranger sojourns with you, and wishes to keep the Passover to the Lord - let all his **males** be circumcised.... **No** uncircumcised person shall eat thereof." Exodus

12:3 & 12:26 & 12:37 with 12:48. See too: Genesis 17:10-27; Exodus 23:14-17 & 34:23-26; and Deuteronomy 16:16f.

Moses also said: "When all Israel has come to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He shall choose, you shall read this Law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together - men and women and children, and your stranger that is within your [city] gates - so that they may hear, and so that they may learn and fear the Lord your God and observe to do all the words of this law, and so that their **children** who have **not known anything** may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God!"⁷¹

Exterminating nations like the Amelekites

The treatment of many of the **near-by** pagan cities, was to be more severe than those of the Midianites *etc.* This was so, probably on account of the proximity of the latter (and hence their greater juxtapositional danger) to Israel.

The **near-by** pagan cities were to be treated more harshly than those further afield, probably also on account of their **great(er) depravity**. For all the Amelekites, Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites were to be exterminated from under Heaven.

Here, the inspired Moses told God's people: "You shall save alive nothing that breathes!"⁷² Once again, however, this says nothing about the suitability of **everlasting** punishment specifically for their **babies**.

The same temporal fate seems to have been meted out to evil Jericho. For almost all the inhabitants of that ungodly city were incinerated.⁷³

Yet even there, God caused not only the **newly-converted** Rahab but also "her father's household and all that she had" to be spared from that holocaust. That would occur when He, through the Israelites, destroyed that pagan place.⁷⁴

Indeed, also when Hiel later sinfully sought to rebuild Jericho - he himself was rightly cursed. Yet we are not told that also his firstborn and also his youngest son (and still less his other children) were cursed - either together with him, or subsequently.⁷⁵

For there is no statement in God's Word that they too were cursed - even in the light of the severe temporal misfortune they apparently suffered on account of the sin of their father Hiel. Still less is there any implication that they were predestinated unto everlasting hell.

Yet the entire family of Achan was exterminated (at least temporally).⁷⁶ Indeed, that was from even **within** the covenant.

So too, utterly all of the inhabitants of pagan Ai⁷⁷ - and all the heathen folk in the hill country, the south country, the vale country and the springs country.⁷⁸ Yet, once again, nothing is said about the **everlasting** punishment of their **babies**.

Solomon's inspired hope for aborted or miscarried babies

King David, a man after God's own heart, admitted that even he himself had been conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity.⁷⁹ Yet "the wicked are **estranged** from the womb. They go **astray** as soon as they be born."⁸⁰

David obviously raised Solomon with the right set of values. So it is significant that precisely the inspired Solomon viewed aborted or miscarried babies with some degree of **favour**.

Proclaims Solomon: "I praised the dead who are already dead, more than the living who are still alive. Yes, **better** than both of them - is he who has not yet...seen the evil work that is being done under the sun.... If a man begets a hundred children and lives many years so that the days of his years be many, but his soul is not be filled with good and he also not get buried - **better** is he that is born **untimely**, who cannot see the sun.... This [latter] one, has more rest than the other.... The day of death is better than the day of one's birth.... You do not know what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones grow in the womb of her that is with child.... Rejoice, O young one, in your youth! ... Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth!" Cf. Ecclesiastes 4:2f; 6:3-5; 7:1; 11:5f to 12:1.

It is significant that also another - a learned man very well familiar with Ecclesiastes (*viz.* the Apostle Paul) - elsewhere calls himself the "one born out[side] of due time." First Corinthians 15:8. Yet, he too was still **elect**! Titus 1:1.

Dr. Matthew Henry on hope for the miscarried in Ecclesiastes 4:2 to 11:5

On the above passages in Ecclesiastes, Rev. Dr. Matthew Henry remarks in his great unabridged *Commentary on the Holy Bible* that Solomon the Preacher "here thinks them **happy** who have ended this miserable life.... I praised the dead that are already dead I concluded that it is better with them, than with the living that are yet alive

"This may be compared not with Job 3:20-21 but with Revelation 14:13," explains Dr. Henry. "The condition of the saints that are dead and gone to **rest** with God is, upon many accounts, better and more desirable than the condition of living saints.... Better never to have been born - than be born to see the evil work that is done under the sun

"When riches increase we are most apt to set our hearts upon them. Now, concerning this miser, observe...the preference which the Preacher gives to an untimely birth before him. An untimely birth - a child that is carried from the womb to the grave - **better** than he.

"**Better** is the fruit that drops from the tree before it is ripe, than that which is left to hang on till it is rotten. Job, in his passion, thinks the condition of an untimely birth better than his - when he was in adversity (Job 3:16). But Solomon here pronounces it better [even] than the condition of a worldling in his greatest prosperity....

"He prefers it before that of a covetous miser. This untimely birth **more rest** than the other [*viz.* the miser].

For this [the one born untimely] **hasome rest** - but the other has none. This [one] has no trouble and disquiet. But the other is in perpetual agitation, and has nothing but trouble - trouble of his own making.

"The shorter the life is, the longer the **rest** - and the fewer the days and the less we have to do with this **troublesome** world, the less trouble we know. 'Tis better [to] die **child** at four; than live and die **so**, [at] fourscore

" The day of death is preferable to the birth-day [alias the day of birth (or even the day of conception)].... The day of our death which will put a period [alias an end] to our cares and toils and sorrows, and remove us to **rest and joy and eternal satisfaction** - is better than the day of our birth which ushered us into a world of so much sin and trouble....

"We know not what is the way of the Spirit We know not whence it comes or whither it goes [cf. John 3:5-8].... It may be understood of the human soul.... We know not how the bones are fashioned in the womb of her that is with child.

"We cannot describe the matter either of the formation of the body, or of its in-form-ation with a soul. Both, we know, are the work of God. " Thus Matthew Henry.

Professor Franz Delitzsch's *Biblical Psychology*: fetal access to God's love

In his famous 1875 book *A System of Biblical Psychology*, the great German Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Franz Delitzsch makes some acute remarks about the accessibility of the love of God even to unborn human fetuses - also before they might get aborted or miscarried.

Discussing the above-mentioned texts and other portions of Holy Scripture, in Part IV and Section VIII of his book Delitzsch sets out the following facts anent the commencement and development of human life.

Explains Delitzsch: "Wherever the Holy Scripture speaks of the act of begetting and conception, e.g. Psalm 51:5, it speaks of it as of a fact to which is referred the beginning of the being.... Even the male or female sexuality is already distinguished according to Scripture in this moment of commencement. Job 3:3 & Luke 1:36....

"The development of the embryo - to the wisdom of the Israelite - stands for one of the most profound mysteries. As thou knowest not what is the way of the wind, says the Preacher [alias Ecclesiastes] (11:5), nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child - as thou knowest not the growing of this into a man - even so thou canst not know the works of God Who maketh all

"The brute soul has not formed to itself its own body, but it is the constitution of the creative Spirit - which came forth at the divine call to [bring the new human life into] being at the same moment with the body.... From the first moment of its beginning to be - the embryo is a germinating concrete unity of body and soul....

"The life of the soul does not unfold itself without at the same time the self-consciousness of the spirit glimmering near it in the background, and so glimmering on throughout the development. The Scripture...supposes that with the embryonic beginning of bodily life is produced, at the same time, the beginning of the spirit's and the soul's life....

"According to Luke 1:15, John [the baptizer] even in his mother's womb was said to be full of the Holy Ghost.... Moreover, Scripture relegates secret events, which primarily concern the spirit, back into the life of the embryo - especially the separating and sanctifying to a lofty call. Isaiah 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15....

As well believing love of God (Psalm 22:10 *et seq.* & 71:6) as self-turning departure from God (Psalm 58:4 & Isaiah 48:8), are dated back at least without any limits into the period of infancy. To say nothing of Genesis 25:22, Hosea 12:2-4, & Luke 1:41.... The mysteries of the Kingdom are revealed to infants - *neepiois* (Matthew 11:25).... God has chosen *ta moora tou kosmou* [the world's simple] to shame the wise. First Corinthians 1:27 Psalm 8:2.

Precisely in the child..., the spirit comes to the first development. This corresponds to its nature of love, originating from God....

The soul of the child...is not yet clouded by the gloomy shadows of sensuality.... It is not yet thoroughly disordered by the magic power of the passions. It is the still-clear lovely mirror of that firstling life of the spirit."

Rev. Prof. Dr. Delitzsch and Rev. J. Kok on the miscarried in Ecclesiastes

Delitzsch comments favourably on the status of those aborted or miscarried, in Ecclesiastes 4:2f & 6:3f & 7:1 & 11:5f & 12:1f. "Better than he who is born," explains Dr. Delitzsch, "is the unborn who does not become conscious of the wicked actions that are done under the sun....

"So long as...man's existence lies in the present life...[and] is not viewed as the forecourt of eternity, there is no enduring consolation to lift us above...this present world.... It is probable that...also [in] Job 3:16" there is "an influence on the formation of the thought. *Neebel'* is the foetus which comes lifeless from the mother's womb" - regardless as to whether intentionally aborted, or as to whether accidentally miscarried.

Franz Delitzsch then favourably contrasts the condition of "**it**" (alias the one either aborted or miscarried) with that of the "**other**" (alias the one who lives a long and prosperous life). For ultimately, things go "better with **it** than with that **other**.... It is carried away in **quietness**....

It **is** happy to have neither seen the sun nor known and named it....

"There is...scarcely any life that is absolutely joyless." That is indeed very true. Yet, here something is "said of the **rest** [alias the **peaceableness**] of an untimely birth...**excelling** the termination of the life of him who has lived long....

"The growth of the child in the mother's womb is compared to the growth of the future in the womb of the present, out of which it is born (Proverbs 27:1 *cf.* Zephaniah 2:2f).... **Rejoice,**

young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart **cheer** thee in the days of thy youth.... **Remember** thy **Creator** in the days of thy youth! "

As we have already seen previously (in Franz Delitzsch's comments on Job 3:1~~8~~): "Millionaires, **abortions** (*vid.* Ecclesiastes 6:3), and the **still-born** - all these are removed from the sufferings of this life in their **quiet** of the grave.... There, *i.e.* **in the grave**, all en-joy the **rest** they could not find here.... The Pilel *shaa⁷a:nan*...signifies perfect **freedom** from **care**."

Finally, Rev. J. Kok has some very useful comments on Ecclesiastes 6:3-6 - in his 1899 book *Solomon's Preacher*. Speaking about the long-lived man of wealth, Kok declares: "I say that a miscarriage is **better** than he!

For it is better not to be born, than to be a miserly man with a superfluity of misery. A **miscarriage** is an **unripe** fruit (Psalm 58:8f & Job 3:16). But fruit which falls **before** it is **ripe** - is **better** than fruit which rots on the tree....

"The one [*viz.* the miscarriage] cannot desire; the other [*viz.* the miser] is always desiring. The one is deprived, without debt; the other [is deprived], with deliberation. The **one** has **rest** (and rests **before** everybody else); the other **never** has **rest**.... The first has **immediate rest**; [but] with the other, his restlessness increases, the older he gets.... Job 3:11-17 & Job 10:18-19f."

Jeroboam's son Abijah - and the children saved by Elijah and Elisha

Perhaps most interesting of all is the very important case of Abijah, the child of wicked King Jeroboam. He only of Jeroboam's household enjoyed a decent burial - "because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam."

Clearly, this child of an ungodly parent - in order to be the repository of "some good thing" - must himself already have been born again. Thus too Rev. Dr. D.J. de Groot, in his definitive book *The Rebirth*.⁸¹

Further, when wicked king Ahab of Israel was reigning, Hiel of Bethel sinfully rebuilt Jericho. Consequently, his firstborn as well as his youngest were affected by their cursed father's **sift** - though not (*ipso facto*) thereby sent to hell. Yet, also in the days of Ahab, when Elijah prayed in pagan Zarephath for the dead child of a poor Sidonian lady - namely a woman who had just asked that prophet whether he had come to call her **sin** to remembrance - the child **revived**!⁸³

In the days of Elijah's successor Elisha, the death occurred of the only child of an important Shunammite woman Elisha knew. She fetched him, telling Elisha her dead child was "well." Indeed, when Elisha prayed to the Lord - the child came back to life.

Surely the Shunammite's previous statement to Elisha that her now **dead** child was still "**well**" - clearly expressed her conviction that all was well with that dead child also **in the next life**. Indeed, here the famous theologian Cyprian later saw significance even for infant baptism.⁸⁴

Jonah's little Ninevites and Isaiah's prophecies about babies

Under the preaching of Jonah, the pagan people of Nineveh repented -- "from the greatest of them even to the least of them." That also embraced "more than six hundred thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand." This big number of 600 000, apparently consisted largely of the tiny children of that then-huge pagan metropolis (thus Calvin). Indeed, even all of the city's domestic animals were spared.⁸⁵

Nevertheless, universalists should note that the city was spared not because it contained human beings. It was spared -- solely because the people who could do so, **repented**.

In Isaiah,⁸⁶ God promised that when the Messiah would come -- "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb...and a little child shall lead them.... The sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain [said God]. For the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas!"

This may indeed indicate also an **extension** of God's grace. Well may it suggest the salvation of yet **more** babies during New Testament times than under the truly magnificent mercy even of the Old.

However, what about specifically the wicked King of Babylon and his wicked children? Were they not all ordered to be slaughtered -- and for their **own** sins?

Yes indeed; but by (fellow-pagan) official executioners! This was lest they fill the World with even more violence.⁸⁷ No doubt they slew not only wicked children, but also much younger innocent infants too. Yet the latter were not thereby damned.

Even God's own backslidden covenant people were rebuked most severely -- for inflaming themselves with idols, and then "slaying the children in the valleys under the clefts of the rocks."⁸⁸ Yet this stern rebuke of the adults indicates God's compassionate concern precisely for the tiny babies of those very ungodly parents.

That great concern certainly relates at least to the horrendous fact that infants were being killed apparently by their own parents (in a very cruel way). In addition, it possibly relates also to the better quality of their unannihilatable everlasting future existence thereafter.

After the time of Isaiah, ungodly King Amon was succeeded by his godly young son Josiah. Now "Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign.... He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as did Manasseh his father.... Amon sacrificed to all the carved images...and did not humble himself before the Lord....

"Then the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead. Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign.... And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his [fore-]father."⁸⁹ As in the prior case of Jeroboam, this yet again shows how ungodly parents -- may nevertheless father godly little children.

The "innocents" in the prophecies of Jeremiah

It was in the days of this Josiah that the Word of the Lord came to the prophet Jeremiah.⁹⁰ He denounced the people of Jerusalem, saying: "In your skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents!"⁹¹ This is apparently a reference to the innocent blood of covenant children shed by adult covenant-breakers.

Jeremiah subsequently castigated those who had: forsaken the Lord; burned incense to other gods in the valley of Hinnom [a picture of hell itself]. Indeed, they had filled Jerusalem "with the blood of innocents."⁹²

What does that signify? Here, observes Calvin,⁹³ the expression "the blood of innocents" means that shed by their sacrificing even of their very own children - as an offering to the pagan gods of the surrounding heathen who were then corrupting even the covenant people themselves.

A little later, Jeremiah said⁹⁴ apparently of King [Je]Coniah: "You must write this man childless -- a man that shall not prosper in his days! For no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah."

Consequently, Jeconiah's son Assir did not prosper⁹⁵. If he was better off dead, it seems he must then have gone to a better place -- in spite of the ungodliness of his father Jeconiah.

God's tiny children born to ungodly parents

In Ezekiel 9:3-6, "the God of Israel...called out to the man clothed with linen." That man was commanded by the Lord: "Go through the midst of the city...of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the persons that sigh and that cry out because of all the abominations that are done in her midst! "

God's command was very specific. Thus the Lord said: "Slay utterly, old and young -- both maidens, and little children, and women! But do not come near anyone upon whom is the mark!"

Note here that it is not the sucklings (alias *yoone'qiym*) but only the abomination-working "children" (alias *taf* or post-toddler pre-adolescents) that were to be slain in Ezekiel 9:4. But far more importantly: nothing whatsoever is said here anent their everlasting post-mortal destination (whether in Heaven or elsewhere).

Yet the implications of this for the baptism of believers (regardless of their age) - and the necessity of distinguishing them from unbelievers - should be clear. Thus too Cyprian, in his Epistle to Demetrianus. However, those wearing the mark of God - both tiny infants and aged adults - would be preserved.

Ezekiel 16:20f is even more profound. There, God Himself calls the sons and daughters of the covenant - those whom their thoroughly apostate and ungodly parents had slain and sacrificed to idols - "My children!"

Thus, God continues to rebuke these apostates. Why? As He Himself tells them - "because your filthiness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered...with all the idols of your abominations, and by the blood of your children which you did give them!" Ezekiel 16:36. Significantly, Calvin himself here calls this: "pouring forth **innocent** blood."⁹⁶

In Ezekiel 18:2, reference is made to a sinful saying. That is: "It is the fathers who have eaten sour grapes; but it is the children whose teeth have been set on edge!"

This adage was often appealed to later by the ungodly Pelagians - in a vain attempt to disprove the transmission of original sin to unborn infants. Yet such an appeal was entirely misplaced. For it is clear the passage is dealing with sins committed by **adults**.

Such ungodly adults - as descendants of their ancestors - were then acting highly irresponsibly. For they were blaming their forebears for the sins which they themselves, their children, had committed - and after themselves attaining adulthood.

This latter is obvious, from the list of sins described. For those sins included: adultery, oppression, violence and usury. All those sins were and are quite impossible of being committed by an infant - if not also by anyone who is not yet at least an adolescent. Compare the passage Ezekiel 18:6f.

Does the psalmist encourage dashing babies against stones?

During or after the Babylonian captivity, the Israelites composed a subsequently-famous psalm. They sang: "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem - who said, Rase it, rase it, even to its foundation! " They added: "Babylon, which is to be destroyed - happy shall he be who rewards you in the way you have served us! Happy shall he be who takes and dashes **your little ones** against the stones!"⁹⁷

The **little ones** of Babylon mentioned in this psalm do not seem to have been nor to have included infants or even toddlers. This expression **little ones** here translates the Hebrew word *^oolaalayik* - where the noun *^oolaal* does not refer to sexually non-violent infants, but mischief-makers such as those old enough to abuse women.

Thus the standard Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (by Brown, Driver and Briggs). Indeed, these *^oolaal(iym)* are mentioned in the same breath as the **children** of Edom - who had **assisted** the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem.

Those **children** of Edom were almost certainly only adults or at least adolescents. They were definitely old enough to say against Jerusalem: Rase it, rase it, even to its foundation! "

In any case, nothing is here being said about **postmortal** everlasting punishment of little ones by God in hell forever - but only about the merely-mortal and quick destruction of little ones by men here on Earth. For the imprecation is merely a descriptive non-ethical statement - and not a prescriptive and normative ethical commandment.

Moreover, in spite of the infallibility of the divinely-inspired record, it is not the sinless God Himself but only certain rather sinful Israelites who here pronounced those to be "happy" who would dash the little ones of Babylon against stones. Compare too the footnote hereon in the Eerdmans edition of Calvin *Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (at 137:9), which states:

"This is not the language of imprecation, but of prophecy [alias prediction], and predicts the horrors which would accompany the taking and sacking of the city of Babylon.... Happy h&c. is merely declarative of the general opinion which would be formed [by men] of the [human] instruments of Babylon's destruction - that they...would be celebrated as having done good service in the world by destroying a power so universally hated for its oppression."

Post-exilic mercy - to the babies even of ungodly parents?

Quite obviously referring to the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ and His substitutionary death, Zechariah predictively prophesied:⁹⁸ "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd.... Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and **I will turn My hand to the little ones**.... In all the land (says the Lord)...the third shall be left therein."

This probably means that God would have mercy upon the little ones (thus Calvin). It might even mean that those little ones themselves would constitute fully a third of the covenant people - the one-third that would be spared. This would then occur after their wicked parents and other wicked adults (constituting the other two-thirds of the nation) had been cut off in death.

In Ezra and Nehemiah, especially the children of two pagan spouses seem to be regarded as unholy. For only the children of the covenant are called a "holy seed."⁹⁹ So too Malachi (their later contemporary) clearly teaches¹⁰⁰ that the children of non-polygamous or non-adulterous covenanters are "godly seed."

Conversely, this also seems to imply that the children of polygamists and adulterers might well not be godly seed - alias the seed of believers. Yet even that, of course, would not necessarily imply that this seed - especially if dying during infancy - was everlastingly lost.

Summary of the Old Testament teaching on infant salvation

In the Old Testament, then, all men without exception are described since the fall as being tainted with sin -- even from their conception onward. Yet also salvation is regarded as being available - even from the very womb.

Indeed, there is a close connection between believers and their babies - inside God's covenant. There is a certain solidarity also between unbelievers and their descendants - outside the covenant. Yet it is significant that the infants even of the ungodly were usually spared - whenever pagan cities were wiped out.

There are examples too of extra-covenantal **blessings** being heaped upon certain Non-Israelites and their whole households. Thus Rahab, Job and the Ninevites. Thus, both Job (3:1-21) and

Ecclesiastes (4:2f & 6:3-5 & 7:1 & 11:5f) seem to look upon all miscarried fetuses rather favourably as far as salvation is concerned. This seems to apply also even to those deliberately aborted by ungodly parents.

There are indeed also a few examples of covenant curses being heaped upon some of the children even of Noah and Abraham (and their descendants). Thus Canaan and the Canaanites, and Esau and the Edomites. Genesis 9:25 & Malachi 1:3f. Yet conversely, there are also cases of very godly children being born even to ungodly parents like Jeroboam and Manasseh - and also to apostates in the time of Ezekiel (16:20f).

Rebuttably, all the children of Israel were regarded as children of God - at least while still infants. Even Cain, Ishmael and Esau - as long as they were still small children - were regarded in a favourable light. They were never then represented to their own parents in a negative way by the Lord.

Only some babies outside of the covenant were thus favourably spoken of. Yet none are said to have been consigned to everlasting punishment. Such babies as were justified - whether Israelites or Non-Israelites - were all first given a personal faith in Jehovah, and thus justified by grace and through each's own God-given personal faith in the Lord. Of course, only those babies (and adults) who were themselves **believers** - were thus blessed.

III. THE NEW TESTAMENT ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this chapter on the New Testament teaching anent the salvation of early-dying infants, we shall first look at the sanctifying power of Jesus' incarnation even from conception (including Jesus Christ's own doctrine anent the salvation of little ones). Next, we shall note the apostolic teaching in general anent infant salvation.

Then we shall refer especially to the apostles James and Peter and John on infant salvation. Lastly, we shall note the several New Testament references on infant salvation given in the *Westminster Confession* (also as understood in the light of the significant 1901 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*) - and of yet other texts as further understood, and very differently so, by the later 1903 *Declaratory Act of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.*

The sanctifying power of Christ's incarnation from conception onward

Also in the New Testament, we encounter on the one hand the liaison between unbelievers and their descendants - and on the other, the rather compact solidarity of believers and their babies. The latter, however, is by no means congruent with being in the covenant.

Some argument can perhaps be constructed around Christ's incarnation from His conception onward - for the proposition that His merits may well benefit all who die in infancy before becoming old enough to repudiate Him. After all, the entire human race (infants included) were subject to the promised blessings of the covenant of everlasting life which God entered into with Adam before the fall - and then renewed through the Second Adam after the fall. Genesis 1:26-28 & 2:9f & 3:15-24 *cf.* Hosea 6:7.

Thus, also the vital Epistle to the Hebrews (2:6-15) argues: "What is man...that You visit him? You made him.... You did crown him with glory and honour, and appointed him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection, under his feet...."

"We see Jesus...crowned with glory and honour, so that He by the grace of God should taste death for **every** man. Forasmuch then as the **children** are partakers of flesh and blood, He Himself also likewise partook of the same - so that...He might destroy...the devil and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

That Christ's incarnation makes provision for the enlightenment and salvation also of infants, certainly can be argued even from the prologue of John's Gospel. There, it is stated¹⁰¹ that our Lord Jesus Christ enlightens every human being who comes into the World - and that at least some of such, are born again or (re)generated not from the will of the flesh [probably meaning their parents] nor from the will of a human being [even themselves] - but by God Himself.

However, it is also clear that many - including even some covenanters themselves - fell away, and even repudiated Jesus! This is why John the baptizer rightly called the **adult** covenantal

Pharisees and Sadducees a "**generation** of vipers"¹⁰² alias a bunch of poisonous snakes. Indeed, John thus implied they were the seed of that great serpent Satan himself.¹⁰³

Also our Lord Jesus Christ called such adult apostates "a wicked and adulterous generation."¹⁰⁴ He even insisted that they, just like their fathers, would no way escape the damnation of hell.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, He also predicted that God would raise up children for Abraham. That he would do, even from stony-hearted Gentiles.¹⁰⁶

Jesus told the Pharisee Nicodemus that unless a person be born again, he or she cannot even see the Kingdom of God.¹⁰⁷ Yet Jesus clearly also informed Nicodemus that God so loved the **World** - that whosoever believes in His Son would never perish.¹⁰⁸

This implies that whosoever does not believe in Him - is condemned already. For he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God continues to abide on him.¹⁰⁹

That is so, on account of the sin which he, from his conception onward, inherits from Adam - and also on account of his own sins, even from infancy onward. Yet all who believe in Christ - even from their conception onward - are exempted from that wrath.

Jesus is very clear that at His final coming even the steward or manager who did **not** know his Master swill - yet who still committed things worthy of punishment - shall be punished. However, the ignorant will then be punished with few stripes.¹¹⁰

This clearly does not refer to unemployable infants. For it is specifically stated it pertains to negligent and fully accountable adult **stewards**. For, instead of having done their job of feeding others - those stewards would have gotten drunk and beaten up the servants.

Yet children too are lost - until the Lord Jesus finds them! Thus Christ told a Canaanite or Syrophenician woman with a suffering daughter that He had come for the lost.

Indeed, He even suggested that the children of those outside the covenant were little dogs.¹¹¹ Yet, when He saw that woman **faith**, He healed her daughter.

However, not just the little dogs - and also the big dogs ~~were~~ lost. So too were the big sheep - and their little lambs. For the Lord Jesus also said regarding a tiny covenant child alias a little lamb who believed in Him, that He had come to save that which was lost.¹¹²

Indeed, even adult black sheep (and their families) were lost until Jesus found and saved them. As He Himself told the penitent Zaccheus: "Today, salvation has come to this house!"¹¹³

The Saviour further warned even the daughters of Jerusalem that both they and their children would suffer - temporally at least - at the fall of that city.¹¹⁴ Far more seriously still, in His Great Commission - involving the baptism of both adults and infants of all the nations - He clearly said that whosoever does not believe in Him, shall be damned.¹¹⁵

The apostolic teaching in general anent infant salvation

Hence, on Pentecost Sunday, Peter urged his listeners to repent and to save themselves from that untoward generation. For the promise of God's salvation, and baptism as its sign and seal, then came to them - and also to their children.¹¹⁶

Later, also Paul told a trembling jailer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved - and your house[hold]!" Indeed, he had similar advice - also for the households of Lydia, Crispus and Stephanas. Very clearly, these households - thus, even their children too - needed salvation (to "be saved") just as much as did their household-heads.¹¹⁷

"For the wrath of God keeps on being revealed from Heaven against **all** ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who keep on suppressing the truth in unrighteousness."¹¹⁸ "As many as have kept on sinning without law, shall also perish without law."¹¹⁹ "For **all** have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."¹²⁰

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon **all**; for all have sinned.... By the offence of one, judgment came upon **all** unto condemnation."¹²¹ "The wages of sin, is death."¹²²

Thus, also children die. Some, while yet babies. For they too are sinners. Even before the reprobate Esau's birth, God had already decreed to hate him for his sin.

Yet God had also decreed that Esau not die in infancy. Her was to reach adulthood and greatly augment his sins, also by profanely rejecting his birthright¹²³ - before dying at a ripe old age.

Of course, a holy root indeed yields holy branches - **provided** the latter remain on that good root, and in time themselves too bear good fruit. Again, the infants of at least one believing parent are deemed to be holy already -- apparently from their very conception onward.

This is indeed so - provided, subsequently, they themselves faithfully remain associated **with the faith of that believing parent**. Consequently, those infants too receive holy baptism - soon after their own births.

Conversely, however, the child of two unholy parents is not himself or herself holy - but "unclean."¹²⁴ So such a child is therefore not at all entitled to receive baptism - unless and until himself or herself first seem later to have become cleansed (evidenced by what seems to be personal faith in the cleansing blood of Jesus).

Of course, this word "unclean" is not the same as: uncleanable. For the word "unclean" here says nothing at all about any early-dying baby of unbelieving parents himself or herself receiving everlasting punishment after his or her death during infancy.

Indeed, it is significant that the **elect** Apostle Paul does not hesitate to compare himself to an aborted human fetus (First Corinthians 15:8 cf. Titus 1:1). This he did, even though those deliberately aborted are usually the infants precisely of ungodly parents.

One cannot deny that at least some "pagan babies" may very well become regenerated even in their dying moments - by the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit. For, while it is quite true that "in Adam all die" - yet, "**even** so, in Christ shall **all** be made alive."¹²⁵

Indeed, also covenant children are "by nature the children of wrath." They too were lost, "even as others"¹²⁶ outside the covenant. Yet God still saves all the early-dying children of believers. Perhaps, then, He may similarly save also all the early-dying infants even of unbelievers.

The apostles James and Peter and John in particular on infant salvation

Especially James seems to indicate that God may well save tiny babies even during their infancy. For James writes to scattered **tribes** - which "tribes" include very many **infants**. James also assures his addressees of those "tribes" - that they were "**born** again" precisely through the ingrafted Word.

He next calls looking after "the fatherless" (alias *orphanous*), an act of "pure religion." Indeed, he then urges Christians to show mercy - **because God Himself does so**. For indeed, God's "mercy keeps on rejoicing against judgment." James 1:1,17ff,21,27 & 2:13.

Also Peter deals with infant salvation. Writing "to the strangers," he reminded even those foreign Christians that they had been regenerated - like newborn babies. He also indicates that the Gospel was preached to those outside the ark in the days of Noah - "so that they may live according to God in the Spirit."

Indeed, that may indicate that at least some of the wicked flood generation - and especially their innocent infants - timeously repented and got justified, in the ~~last~~ **seconds** of their lives **before** their drownings during the deluge. See: First Peter 1:1,10f,23; 2:2ff; 3:19ff; 4:6; Second Peter 2:5.

Peter further admonishes elders to "feed the flock" (5:1ff). He also urges "the younger" to submit themselves to the elders (5:5). Indeed, the Apostle Peter could hardly have forgotten Christ's command also for him to "feed **My lambs!**" John 21:15.

In his First Epistle, John does not mention the infants of unbelievers - but only those of believers. The latter are presumed safe **while yet babies**, but are later urged not to apostasize. "Little children," the Apostle John hastens to assure them, "your sins have been forgiven you for His Name's sake...."

"Little children..., you **have known** the Father.... Now we are sons of God.... Whosoever has been born of God, does not keep on committing sin.... Whosoever does **not keep on doing righteousness**, is not of God." Thus, the apostate child of the covenant "Cain was of that wicked one..., because his [Cain's] own works were evil."¹²⁷

In John's book of Revelation, the same was apparently true not only of the fornicating Jezebel - but even of her children. Yet those latter do seem to have been **old** enough to reveal also their **own** fornicating ways.

Declares Jesus Himself in that book of Revelation, even to His church in Thyatira: "You permit that woman Jezebel - who keeps on calling herself a prophetess - to keep on teaching and to keep on seducing My servants to commit fornication.... Behold, I will cast her onto a bed - and them who keep on committing adultery with her into great tribulation - if they do not repent of their deeds.

"Then I will kill her children with death. Thus, all the churches shall know that I am He Who continues to search the kidneys and the hearts. Indeed, I will give to every one of you - according to your works."

Now the Lord Jesus Christ would here cast not her own tiny babies but indeed the unrepentant Jezebel herself onto a bed - probably meaning a sick-bed. It seems to be suggesting that He would then confine her to such a bed, seeing she was illicitly bedding down with her many paramours. Indeed, He would also cast those who continue to commit adultery with her, into great tribulation. Yet, from those dire punishments (and perhaps also from the everlasting sufferings they seem to foreshadow), Jezebel's own children themselves are apparently exempted.

True, Christ indeed says He will kill them with physical death. Yet, if elect, this killing action would mercifully remove them from their vile mother and her lecherous paramours -- and could thereafter very well convey them straight into Heaven itself.

Finally, in his vision of judgment day, the Apostle John declares almost at the very end of the Bible: "I saw the dead, **small** and great, stand before God.... The dead were judged.... Whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire."

Yet "the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light..., they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Surely this includes also the **infants** of those **nations**.

Infant salvation in the Westminster Confession and in various Declaratory Statements

The above is the New Testament's teaching anent the salvation of the early-dying infants of infidels. Although not pessimistic, it nevertheless seems to be not quite as encouraging as the picture hereof which the Old Testament portrays.

Very circumspectly, the *Westminster Confession of Faith* accordingly states: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit - Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth. Luke 18:15f; Acts 2:38f; John 3:3f; First John 5:12; Romans 8:9." This is truly a most excellent statement.

The *Confession* thereafter very carefully concludes: "All persons that have lived upon Earth shall appear before the tribunal of Christ...for the manifestation of the glory of His mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect -- and of His justice in the damnation of the reprobate.... Second Corinthians 5:10; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Romans 2:16."

Now some today apodictically assert that Christ definitely saves quite **all** early-dying infants - regardless of the (un)belief of their parents. All things are possible for a merciful God.

The Holy Bible indeed implies the certain salvation of all early-dying babies of those who themselves believe in the Triune God and the work of Christ. Yet it makes no such assumption as regards the certainty of the salvation of all the many early-dying children of unbelievers.

It leaves the latter matter open, and wisely rests in the inscrutable mercy of Almighty God. Thus, correctly, the 1901 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*.

Yet the 1903 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.*, laxly, has tries to scruthe inscrutable. For it has declared: "**We believe that all** dying in infancy are included in the election of grace and are regenerated" *etc.*

Many American Presbyterian theologians who themselves believed in the universal salvation of all dying in infancy - such as Rev. Professor Drs. B.B. Warfield and R.A. Webb and Rev. Dr. S.G. Craig - have disowned the compelling tone of this part of the 1903 *American Declaratory Statement*. Indeed, its language at this point is not Biblical, nor Confessional. Significantly, even while issuing this *Statement* in 1903, the PCUSA was already declining.

The truth is that both Scripture and the *Westminster Standards* are silent on this point. Rightly, then, the 1901 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia* simply states: "It is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost."

Yet infallible Holy Scripture certainly states that "without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6. Hence, it must also follow that none dying during infancy can be justified - **unless** first exercising a personal trust in the Lord Jesus Christ (as a faithful first-fruit of an already-accomplished regeneration by God the Father in the power of His Holy Spirit).

Summary of the New Testament teaching on infant salvation

Not just in the Old but also in the New Testament, the total depravity of fallen man from infancy onward is clearly presupposed. Romans 3:9-23 and First Corinthians 7:14. Also the absolute necessity of regeneration as a prerequisite for salvation, is clearly presupposed. John 3:3-8 and Titus 3:3-7.

The regeneratedness or holiness of all [early-dying] infants conceived by at least one believing parent, seems to be implied in First Corinthians 7:14. There, the unregeneratedness or uncleanness of infants generated by two unbelieving parents -- also seems to be implied. This, however, says nothing about their regeneratability or cleansibility - before they might die, especially during their infancy.

Now the New Testament does seem to imply that all dying during infancy -- are justified before their deaths. Thus, referring to tiny children, Jesus Himself declares that "the Son of man had come to save that which was lost" - because "it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish." Thus: Matthew 18:1-14.

Also the Apostle John insists that the Lord Jesus Christ is "the true Light which keeps on enlightening every human who comes into the World" and who by His grace has been

"(re)generated by God." John 1:9-13. Unless each and **any** human being has been born again by the Spirit, he or she cannot enter into - or even see - the Kingdom of God. John 3:3-8.

Yet God so loved the **World** - that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the World to condemn the World - but **so that the World might be saved** through Him. John 3:16-17.

Paul too seems to agree. "By one man [Adam], sin entered into the World, and death by sin.... But the free gift is not like the offence.... Through the offence of one, many be dead. **Much more** the grace of God, and the gift by grace - which is by one man, Jesus Christ - has abounded to many.... By one man's offence, death reigned by one [Adam]. **Much more** they which receive **abundance** of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation -- even so by the righteousness of One, the free gift came upon **all** men unto **justification**.... Where sin abounded, **grace did much more abound!**" Romans 5:12-20.

"The **un-believing husband is sanctified by the wife** - and the un-believing wife is sanctified by the husband. Otherwise your **children would be unclean; but now, they are holy**.... Christ has risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those that slept [or died]. For since by man came death - by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall **all** be made alive." First Corinthians 7:14 & 15:20-22.

We sum up this evidence given by the New Testament. Rebuttably, all early-dying (regeneratable) infants even of unbelieving parents, then seem to go to glory. Irrebuttably, all early-dying infants of at least one believing parent - certainly go to Heaven.

IV. THE EARLY CHURCH ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this chapter, we shall deal with the position of the Early Church anent the salvation of early-dying infants. First, we shall note the attitude of the Apostolic Fathers toward abortion - and determine what the Early Church believed anent the everlasting destination of the aborted babies of the wicked in the hereafter.

Next, we shall note the views of the great anti-heretical paedobaptist Irenaeus on infant salvation - and of those of his fellow-paedobaptist Clement of Alexandria on God's attitude anent the salvation also of babies. We shall next note the antipaedobaptizing Tertullian's view of infant salvation and indeed also of sacramentalism. Then we shall determine the role played by the A.D. 250f paedobaptist Cyprian in the very long development of the magical and unbiblical theory of fully-fledged baptismal regenerationism.

Thereafter, we shall see how Gregory of Nyssa still remained a bastion of prebaptismal regeneration - arguing that the death of dying babies is for their own good (thus Warfield). We shall note it was not till after A.D. 350 that the Rubicon of baptismal regenerationism would be crossed - and that even then the *Vision of Paul* would itself insist that all unbaptized aborted infants go to Heaven.

After 390 A.D., we shall see that magical baptism would soon conquer the Church -- until the Protestant Reformation. There would be an ongoing sacramentalization of Augustine's perceptions anent infant salvation, which would result in his unfavourable view of the prebaptismal condition of all babies. Indeed, we shall see how the aged Augustine would come to think that unbaptized infants were condemned to hell.

We shall then note Augustine of Hippo's clear opposition to the Briton Pelagius anent the punishability of infants, and see that Augustine's final baptismal view was in overreaction to Pelagius. Nevertheless - we shall also see that Augustine firmly repudiated a limbo for unbaptized babies (also on the strength of John 14:1-6). A sober assessment will then be given anent Augustine's views on infant salvation, especially in the light of his other views anent grace given to the children even of unbelievers.

Infant salvation in the post-apostolic Early Church

During the first few centuries of church history, not too much thought was given to the question of infant salvation. The matter of the eternal condition of little children in the hereafter, only became urgent later - after the false doctrine of baptismal regenerationism began to impact more and more upon ecclesiastical thinking.

Certainly the Early Church knew the infallible Bible itself strongly urges the infant baptizing of the babies of believers. Genesis 17:6-14; Exodus 4:24-26; Luke 18:15-17; Acts 2:38-39; 16:31-33; Romans 4:11f; First Corinthians 1:2,16f; 3:1-7; 6:11; 7:14; 10:1-2; 12:13; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 2:11-13. Yet Holy Scripture also teaches the salvation of all of God's elect - whether they be baptized or not,¹³² and whether they die in infancy or not.

The Early-Patristic Church, though not itself infallible, by and large did follow the infallible Scriptures. The very fallible Late-Patristic Church, however, increasingly became deformed

She departed more and more from the Bible, especially as regards this particular point. Thus by 400 A.D., after being infiltrated by Paganism - she was falsely alleging that baptism is absolutely necessary for the salvation also of infants.

Until then, as the Presbyterian Rev. Samuel M. Jackson of New York pointed out in his article *Infant Baptism* (in the old *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia* of which he was an Associate Editor): "The doctrines of infant damnation and of non-elect infants were unknown to the early Church.

"The fact that the baptism of infants was so commonly postponed to Easter Week, proves that it was even not considered any loss to the child to die unbaptized. But, as sacerdotal and ecclesiastical ideas spread in the Church, baptism was more and more emphasized - until Gregory of Nazianze and Ambrose (fourth century) could say that unbaptized children could not be saved."

Previously, right after the apostolic age, the Early Church stoutly opposed both abortion and infanticide - also among unbelievers. With the latter, both of those practices were then widespread.

Rightly viewing both abortion and infanticide as capital sins, the Early Church opposed them -- especially as regards Christians. There, these practices were regarded as so heinous - as to be altogether worthy of excommunication at the very least. Thus the *Didachee*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, the *Epistle to Diognetus*, the *Apocalypse of Peter* - and also the various writings of Justin Martyr, Theodotus, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Clement of Alexandria and Hippolytus.

Church Councils too outrightly condemned abortion. Thus that of Elvira (in 305 A.D.) excommunicated Members of the Church who procured abortions after committing adultery - and would not re-admit them even on their deathbeds. The 314 Council of Ancyra denounced women who "slay that which has been generated." The latter was approved implicitly at the vital 325 Council of Nicea - and also at the 381 Council of Constantinople, the Council of Ephesus in 431 and the 451 Council of Chalcedon *etc.*

Abortion was also strongly condemned by Basil the Great; by the *Vision of Paul*; and by Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine and John Cassian. Thus, as Basil the Great explained: "The hair-splitting difference between formed and unformed [fetuses] - makes no difference to us. Whosoever deliberately commits abortion, is subject to the penalty for homicide."

Certainly the approximately 145 A.D. work known as the *Shepherd of Hermas* assumed the purity not just of those believers who had been baptized. It apparently also assumed the innocence of **all** children -- being little believers ? -- both the sealed alias the baptized, as well as the unsealed alias those who died or fell asleep unbaptized.

For *Hermas* explains that the baptized - also among "those who fell asleep" - received the seal of the Son of God.... The seal, then, is the water." Yet all "they who had fallen asleep ...[now] **slept in righteousness** and in great purity - **even when they did not have this seal.**"

For even such adults who have believed, "are as infant children in whose hearts no evil originates. Nor did they know what wickedness is, but always remained as children.... They remained like children all the days of their life, in the same mind.... For **all infants are honourable before God**, and are the **first** persons **with Him**."

Even the aborted babies of the wicked seem to go to glory in the hereafter

The *Apocalypse of Peter* seems to have been written around 150 A.D. It pronounces a clear curse upon those ungodly women "who conceived - but caused abortion" deliberately thereafter, simply to get rid of their unborn babies. For, after their own deaths, it is those evil mothers that are said to be smitten between their eyes by sparks of fire then coming forth from their own previously-aborted children. Yet the latter, after their own deaths, are "delivered over to caretaker angels - so that they may attain a share of knowledge and gain the better abode."

About the same time the above-mentioned *Apocalypse* was written, the great Samaritan Christian Justin Martyr called *immaculate* - the children aborted by wicked parents who then practised divination from the entrails of those slaughtered infants. Because to him *immaculate* - Justin clearly believed that those human fetuses aborted by a wicked parent would at death go straight to the equally immaculate Heaven. The wicked mother, however, if still unrepentant when herself later dying - would then go straight to hell.

Rebuking those wicked parents, Justin stated: "Eternal punishment is laid up [for the wicked]. See that you do not neglect to be convinced! Do not hold on to your superstition! ... For let even necromancy and the divinations you practise through *immaculate* children...persuade you - that even after death, souls are in a state of sensation!"

Here, Justin's "state of sensation" for the dead children even of the wicked, should carefully be noted. An unconscious state and place called *limbus infantum* or *limbo* for unbaptized babies - as indeed taught by the later Mediaeval Church - was quite contrary to the views of saints like Justin in the middle of the second century. Very significantly, he was a leader among the early Apologists of Christ's Church.

Also the Anti-Gnostic Early Church Father Theodotus. He states that clearly regenerated and sentient (yet obviously-unbaptized) "aborted infants share a better fate" than do unbelieving adults (whether the latter themselves were or ever get baptized or not). For "baptism...is the **sign** of regeneration."

So, being *born again* is a regenerative deed deemed to have been accomplished already **before** baptism. Thus, the latter was therefore a consequence - and not the cause - of regeneration.

Such aborted babies of wicked parents - by the grace of God and by way of a God-given and personal faith in Christ's work also for those babies - therefore apparently go to Heaven. But their aborting parents and all other wicked abortionists - if remaining unrepentant - apparently go to hell.

The anti-heretical paedobaptist Irenaeus on infant salvation

There is evidence that certain heretics in the middle of the second century not only rejected apostolic infant baptism - but also infant salvation as such. Such heretics include some of the Marcionites, and some of the Montanists.

However, around 185 A.D., the orthodox anti-heretical paedobaptist Irenaeus seemed to assume that Christ's incarnation benefits all classes of mankind - and thus even **prenatal** human beings. By implication, this includes also all who die unbaptized during infancy - especially those who die within a week after their birth, and thus before living long enough to become baptizable babies. Genesis 17:10-12; Second Samuel 12:14-23; Luke 18:15-17; Acts 2:38-39; Colossians 2:11-13.

For Jesus, explains Irenaeus, "was thirty years old when He came to be **baptized** - then possessing the full age of a teacher.... As a teacher He also possessed the age thereof - not despising or evading any condition of humanity...but sanctifying every age by that period corresponding to it which belonged to Himself.

"**For He came to save all**, through means of Himself - all, I say, who through Him are born again to God: **infants and children** and boys and youths and old men.... He therefore passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, thus sanctifying infants."

Conceivably, this redounded also to the advantage of those dying in infancy. For, as we have seen - thus Irenaeus - "He came to save **all**, through means of Himself."

Irenaeus then gave his reason for this. "For it was incumbent upon the Mediator between God and men...to bring both to friendship and concord - and to present man to God, while He **revealed** God to man. For in what way could we be partakers of the adoption of sons - unless...His Word, having been made flesh, had entered into communion with us? Therefore, also **He** passed through **every** stage of life - restoring communion with God, to **all**."

Yet Irenaeus implies that Christ not only **saves** infants. He further implies that saved infants also **know** this. For Jesus Himself said: "I thank You, O Father..., because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent -- and **revealed** them to **babies**.... Nobody knows...the Father, except the Son and **those** to **whomsoever** the Son shall **reveal** Him." Matthew 11:25-27.

On these above-mentioned words of Jesus, Irenaeus remarks that the term " shall reveal " was said with reference not to the future **alone** - as if the Word had then not yet begun to manifest the Father." To Irenaeus, the term shall reveal here applies indifferently through**all** time.

"For the Son," continues Irenaeus of Jesus, "being present with His own handiwork [including human zygotes and fetuses] **from the beginning** - reveals the Father to **all**...to whom He wills, and **when** He wills.... There is...one salvation to all who **believe** in Him....

"Now that the Word of God forms us in the **womb** - He says 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 Therefore, we are by the Word formed in the womb.... Man [alias all human beings from the

womb to the tomb] - with respect to that formation which...after Adam fell into transgression - needs the **laver of regeneration**."

Here, Irenaeus is extremely precise. He does not say that man - namely every human being (including each human fetus) - needs baptism. He says that man (or each human being) "needs the laver of **regeneration**" - whether or not he or she receives baptism, usually thereafter, as its seal.

Clement of Alexandria on God's saving revelations also to babies

Around 195, we find also Clement of Alexandria writing some very relevant words. To Clement, human **fetuses** and slain **infants** murdered even by a **wicked** parent - are themselves led postmortally into **everlasting life** by caretaker angels. Unrepentant wicked parents themselves, however, are cast into hell.

To the paedobaptistic Clement, the same also seems to apply to the unbaptized **infants** of the unbaptized **wicked** parents who drowned during the great flood - outside the ark. That was while Noah and his holy family were being preserved - and being baptized by the downpouring rainwater then falling upon them (when they were all **already** safely under the roof of and inside the ark). Genesis 7:1-4f; First Peter 3:20f & 4:6; Second Peter 2:5.

Explains Clement in his *Paidogogue* (alias *Child-Instructor*): "The child is...guileless and destitute of hypocrisy, straightforward and upright in mind.... The band of infants - the new people which we [Christians] are - is delicate as a child....

"The stag's fawn and the child of man are looked upon with pleasure by their fathers..... Thus also [God] the Father...cherishes affection towards those who have fled to Him....

"Scripture calls the infant children **lambs** [cf. John 21:15]. It has also called Him Who became man for our sakes and Who wished in all points to be made like to us - the **Lamb** of God (Him...that is...the Child of the Father)....

"Jesus therefore - rejoicing in the Spirit - said I thank Thee, O Father.... Thou hast hid[den] these things from the wise and prudent, and hast **revealed them to babes** [Luke 10:21].... A babe, as **God's little one, is cleansed**."

According to the younger Spanheim, Clement acknowledged the availability of salvation not just inside but also outside of the covenant. In this, held the younger Spanheim, Clement was followed by Tertullian and Epiphanius - and later also by Erasmus and by a whole host of others. (including also many orthodox Calvinists).

Very clearly, the assumption here is that such extra-covenantal adults as Melchisedec and Job and Naaman were all saved. But then, however - *a fortiori* - presumably so too are all of their infant children who may have died while themselves yet babies.

Infant salvation opposed by the anti-paedobaptizing Tertullian

We must carefully distinguish the Orthodox Tertullian I before 200 A.D., from the increasingly heterodox Tertullian II thereafter. For only from around 200 onward, did the influential Tertullian himself begin to "semi-montanize."

Only after A.D. 200, then, did Tertullian - anti-paedobaptizingly - more and more move away **from** apostolic infant baptism. He did so - **toward** his own **novel** and mandatory adults-only view of that sacrament.

Before 200 A.D., however, the orthodox Tertullian I challenged the impenitent: "Who will grant to you...one single **sprinkling** of any water whatever?" Yet at that same time, he also assured those who had repented, that "we are not washed in order that we **may** escape from sinning; but because we **have** ceased" from sinning (at least in principle). Since in **heart**, we have been bathed **already**." See his *On Repentance*, chapter 6.

Even at the end of that time - just when becoming Tertullian II - he still approvingly quoted prenatal (and therefore prebaptismal) texts like Jeremiah 1:5 and Luke 1:41-46. He was then still declaring that believers, washed with the blood of Christ, are justified - even when **not** able to receive water-baptism. See his work *On Baptism*, chapter 16.

However, Tertullian II then began to semi-montanize in earnest - and thus to slip away from apostolic paedobaptism. He now also began to make far too much of adult baptism.

Yet there were even then very many more-biblical Christians -- who stoutly resisted him in this. For they still clung to the earlier apostolic practice of paedobaptism.

In the eleventh to the thirteenth chapters of his very famous treatise *On Baptism*, Tertullian started opposing those more-biblical Christians. Yet, even then, he still conceded: "Behold, say some, the Lord came and baptized not! For we read, And yet He did not baptize! John 4:2."

To this, the then-semimontanizing Tertullian himself responded. He said: "However, the [post-apostolic and, by Tertullian's time, only just recently instituted] **prescript** is laid down - that without baptism, salvation is attainable by none There arose immediately [in Tertullian's own time] scrupulous - nay, rather, audacious - doubts on the part of some."

For these doubters -- in our opinion **rightly** (F.N. Lee) - then resisted that new prescript. They would have none of it!

These scrupulous protesters and Proto-Protestants were then asking the semi-montanizing Tertullian to explain: "How, in accordance with that prescript, salvation is obtainable [even] by the apostles - whom...we do not find baptized in the Lord.... [Thus,] the prescript is rescinded - if salvation has been ordained even for the unbaptized. "

Thus the scrupulous protesters, alias the evangelicals or apostolic-doctrine antisacramentalists. Admitted Tertullian II in his response: "I have heard doubts of that kind."

Yet the only semi-montanizing Tertullian did oppose outright sacramentalism

On the other hand, there were also ultra-extremistic anti-evangelical sacramentalizers -- whom even the semi-montanizing Tertullian thought were going too far the other way. For he goes on to point out that "**others** make the suggestion - clearly forced enough - that the **Apostles** then served the turn of baptism, when in their little ship they were [clearly non-submersively] **sprinkled**...with the waves. " Matthew 8:24.

"It is, however," responds Tertullian, "one thing to be **sprinkled**...by the violence of the sea; another thing, to be baptized.... Whether they [the Apostles] were baptized in any manner whatever, or whether they went on unbathed *illōti* to the end" - either way, for these extremist and anti-evangelical sacramentalizers "to make a determination concerning the salvation of the Apostles, is audacious."

Tertullian then goes on to address yet another group, the evangelical antisacramentalistic protesters. He points out that "**they** say, Baptism is not necessary for them to whom faith is sufficient **They** roll back an objection from that Apostle [Paul] himself, in that he said For Christ sent me not to baptize. " First Corinthians 1:17. Even the as-yet still only **semi-montaniz-ing** and **not-yet-fully** de-orthodoxed and **semi-montan-ized** Tertullian himself then conceded: "**Preaching** is the prior thing; **baptizing**, the posterior."

Cyprian (around A.D. 250f) fathers the falsehood of baptismal regenerationism

However, it was especially Cyprian (from about A.D. 250 onward) who effectively introduced the heresy of baptismal regeneration into the Church. Not derived from Scripture, this neo-pagan and indeed also **re-paganiz-ing** theory suggests that all unbaptized babies - nay more, also all unbaptized adults - are lost.

Mercifully, Cyprian does not apply this in any way to those who died before Calvary. For he calls the unbaptized babies murdered by Herod, **innocent** infants. Yet he clearly implies that, after Calvary, all babies now need baptism - just in order to be saved.

On the one hand, Cyprian rightly states: "The nativity of Christ witnessed at once the martyrdom of infants, so that they who were two years old and under - were slain for His Name's sake. An age not yet fitted for the battle, appeared fit for the crown! That it might be manifest that they who are slain for Christ's sake, are **innocent** -- innocent **infancy** was put to death for His Name's sake."

On the other hand, however, Cyprian also very greatly exaggerated the importance of baptism - at least ever since Calvary. While rightly stating that also infants should be baptized, he wrongly suggests that they (and also all adults) are lost without baptism.

To someone then questioning infant baptism, Cyprian replied: "**You** think that one who has just been born, should not be baptized.... **We** all thought very differently in **our** council....

"The mercy and grace of God is not to be refused to any one born of man.... The Lord says in His Gospel, ' The Son of man is not come to destroy men' s lives, but to save them [Luke 9:56]. As far as we can, we must strive that - if possible - no soul be lost....

"Among all, whether infants or those who are older, there is the same equality of the divine gift.... No one is to be hindered from obtaining grace.... Nobody is hindered from baptism and from grace. How much rather ought we to shrink from hindering an infant who...has contracted the contagion of the ancient death at its earliest birth.... By us, no one ought to be hindered from baptism.... We think [it] is to be ever more observed in respect of infants and newly-born persons who on this very account deserve...the divine mercy....

"What a thing it is to assert and contend that they who are not ' born' in the Church, can be the sons of God.... One is not ' born' [again]...but in baptism.... The ' [re-]birth' of Christians, is in baptism.... Peter himself...has commanded and warned us that we cannot be saved - except by the one only baptism of the Church." Baptismal regeneration –here we come!

Lactantius (around A.D. 300f) opposes the killing of "innocent" infants

This same cyprionic dichotomy carries over also into the A.D. 300f Lactantius. On the one hand Lactantius declares: "Let nobody think that [it]...is allowed to strangle **newly-born children**....

"God breathes into their souls for life, and not for death. But men, that there may be no crime with which they may not pollute their hands, deprive souls **as yet innocent** and simple of the light which they themselves have not given."

On the other hand, however, Lactantius also wrote that Christ "saved the Jews by undergoing circumcision." Christ did so, added Lactantius, "so He might save the Gentiles also by baptism."

Gregory of Nyssa the last patristic bastion of prebaptismal regenerationism

Gregory of Nyssa' s essay *On Infants' Early Deaths* rightly states that "nothing in this World happens without God.... It follows necessarily that there is some plan in these things, bearing the mark of His wisdom.... A human being enters on the scene of life, draws in the air - beginning the process of living...with no advantage over the embryo in the womb except that he [the infant born] has seen the air.... Short-lived, [he then] dies....

"How so we feel about such deaths? Will a soul such as that" then "receive the just recompense, by being...refreshed with the dew of blessing?... If one unreservedly accepts a statement...to the effect that any so passing into life will necessarily be classed among the good - it will dawn upon him then that not partaking in life at all will be a happier state than living....

"The **enjoyment of good** is placed beyond a doubt -- **even with barbarian parentage, or a conception from a union not legitimate**. But he who has lived the span ordinarily possible [namely seventy or eighty years]...gets the pollution of evil necessarily mingled...with his life....

"But in the case of **infants prematurely dying**, there is nothing of that sort.... **They pass to the blessed lot** at once.... As regards the enjoyment of blessedness, the labour to acquire it will be useless folly."

Gregory of Nyssa: the death of early-dying infants is for their own good

"For my part," explained Gregory of Nyssa, "in order that the Earth may not completely be devoid of the local indwelling of the intellectual and the immaterial - man...was fashioned by the Supreme.... The design of all that is being born, then, is that the Power Which is above both the heavenly and the earthly universe may in all parts of the creation be glorified...."

"The present life appears to me to offer a sort of analogy to the future life we hope for.... The tenderest infancy is suckled and reared with milk from the breast.... Another sort of food appropriate to the subject of this fostering, succeeds [or follows] -- until at last he arrives at full growth...."

"For the infant...there is a natural delight in its milk, and in its nurse's arms, and in gentle rocking that induces and then sweetens its slumber.... In the same manner those who in their life here have nourished the forces of their souls...will, if they are translated to that life beyond..., participate in that divine delight...."

"It is a sign of the perfection of God's providence that He not only heals maladies...but also provides that some should never be mixed up at all in the things which He has forbidden. It is reasonable...to expect that He Who knows the future equally with the past, should **check** the advance of an infant to complete maturity in order that the evil may not be developed...."

"Why does God, when fathers endeavour their utmost to preserve a successor to their line, often let the son and heir be snatched away in earliest infancy? ... He is early taken [away] from the number of the banqueters, and thereby secures an escape [from] out of those evils which unmeasured indulgence procures for gluttons."

This is that achievement of a perfect providence which I spoke of -- namely, not only to heal evils that have been committed but also to forestall them before they have been committed.... This, we suspect, is the cause of the deaths of new-born infants....

"Oftentimes the existence of those whose life has been a good one, operates to the advantage of their offspring.... There are hundreds of passages testifying to this in the Inspired Writings [meaning the Holy Bible] - which clearly teach us that the tender care shown by God to those who have deserved it, is shared in by their successors...."

God, in kindness to the founders of some family, withdraws a member of it who is going to live a bad life" - if permitted to live. That is what God does, if He has predestinated from all eternity that such a family member is to be saved.

"The premature deaths of infants have nothing in them to suggest the thought that the one whose life is so terminated, is subject to some grievous misfortune.... In the case of those whose parents

have never imparted to them any power of calling upon God, such a form of the divine kindness...is not transmitted to their own children....

"Otherwise the infant - now prevented by death from growing up wicked - would have exhibited a far more desperate wickedness.... The apostolic view supplies a comforting answer to the question.... This is a case which constitutes an addition to the happiness of the good."

Warfield on Gregory Nyssa's view of infant deaths

According to Warfield, "Gregory of Nyssa...at the opening of his treatise *On Infants' Early Deaths*...speaks of such children.... This treatise...is probably the most extended discussion of the question...which has come down to us from the patristic age....

"Gregory begins by asserting the incongruity of imagining such an infant standing before the judgment-seat of God.... He frankly proceeds in his argument on the assumption that future blessedness belongs of right to human beings who have not forfeited it by sinning personally - and that the infant dying such is therefore entitled to its natural happiness....

"He suggests that though infants enter at once into happiness, they do not at once enter into all the happiness that rewards him who is victor here.... He suggests that the reason why God...[keeps on] removing them [un]to certain bliss in infancy, may be that He owes a debt to their parents' virtue."

Gregory here rightly argues against the damnation of early-dying infants. However, with his talk about the postmortal **natural** happiness of such infants - he unfortunately albeit inadvertently also sowed the seed for the later development of the false doctrine of limbo.

Moreover, Gregory also neglects adequately to connect the escape of these infants from damnation - with their own personal God-given faith in the death of Christ for them. Indeed, Gregory also errs - when he alleges God may owe a "debt to their parents' virtue." For God owes debts to none of His creatures whatsoever (whether fallen or even unfallen).

Yet God does indeed promise to save the early-dying infants of at least such parents who exercise their own God-given faith. That is their faith in the virtue of Christ's death, for them and for their children. Acts 2:38f; Romans 11:16; First Corinthians 7:14.

Crossing the Rubicon of baptismal regenerationism after 350 A.D.

After A.D. 350, the Cappadocian Basil the Great advocated the doctrine of baptismal regenerationism. Cyprian's seed now blossomed.

Also Hilary of Potiers declared that "the regeneration of baptism has the force of resurrection." Indeed, Hilary even went so far as to express the wish: "May I ever hold fast that which I professed in the creed of my regeneration - when I was baptized!"

Here, Hilary's **professing** the creed is commendable. But if he is here equating of his own **regeneration** with the **time** when he was baptized, such an identification is lamentable.

Yet another Cappadocian, Gregory of Nazianzen, though still apparently believing unbaptized children could not go to glory - also felt that God would not punish them (because they themselves had not willed to remain unbaptized). This should be regarded as the chief ecclesiastical stimulus toward what later became the limbo doctrine of the Middle Ages.

Then, however, the Nazianzene rightly declared: "Have you an infant child? Do not let sin get any opportunity! Let him be sanctified from his childhood!"

"From his very tenderest age, let him be consecrated by the Spirit.... Hannah, even **before** Samuel was **born**" -- and thus [**long**] **before** his infant circumcision (*cf.* infant baptism) - "**promised** him to God and, after his birth, **consecrated** him at once" (rather than only eight days later at his infant circumcision).

Here, it is to be appreciated that Gregory Nazianzen rightly seems to locate the **sanctifying** work of the Spirit in Samuel's life **before** his birth and infant circumcision. However, it is probably the latter which Gregory wrongly regards as the **consecration** itself. Consequently the infant baptism which at Calvary replaced circumcision would then itself henceforth more and more become regarded as the act of consecration or **making holy** of Christian children - from the second half of the fourth century onward.

This is seen just a few paragraphs beyond the above quotation. For Gregory had then soon gone on to say: "Some will say, in the case of those who ask for baptism - What have you to say about those who are still children; and conscious neither of the loss nor of the grace? Are we to baptize them too? Certainly, if any danger presses. For it is better that they should be sanctified unconsciously, than that they should depart unsealed and uninitiated...."

" But,[some]one says, Christ was thirty years old when He was baptized...(although He was God)... Do you bid us hurry our baptism? "

To this question, Gregory replied: "You have solved the difficulty when you say He was God. For He was **Absolute Cleansing**. He had no need of cleansing.... But in your case, the danger is to no small interests if you were to depart after a birth to corruption alone - and without being clothed with incorruption."

The Vision of Paul: heavenly infants of aborting parents

Baptismal regenerationism would, after the Cappadocians, soon conquer the Church. First, however, the progress of such sacramentalistic magic was briefly retarded by an apocryphal **vision** of remarkable orthodoxy.

Around 388, what purported to be a *Vision of Paul* was discovered at Tarsus. In the next life, it places aborted and therefore unbaptized babies in Heaven - while further placing their usually-themselves-baptized yet still ungodly parents who aborted them, in hell.

It states that "all the infants whom Herod slew," went to glory. There, they "saluted" Paul. Yet the scene next shifts to hell. There, it reveals the fiery strangling of all the "women who defiled the image of God [viz. their own babies] when bringing forth infants out of the womb" - together with "the men who lay with them" - who aborted those babies.

Solemnly, the *Vision of Paul* then declares that those heavenly "infants address the Lord God and the angels appointed over punishments." Exclaim those infants: "Cursed be the hour to our parents! For they defiled the image of God - having the Name of God [which they themselves previously received in baptism], but not observing His precepts! They gave us, for food, to dogs - and to be trodden down, by swine!"

Such aborting parents had not, however, thrown **all** of their little ones only to the dogs or to the swine. "Others, they threw into the river." Cf. Exodus 1:15 to 2:4 with Acts 7:18-21 & 7:51. But, without the parents so intending, thus "**their infants** were handed over **to the angels**...so that **they** may lead them to a wide **place of mercy**. Yet their own **fathers and mothers** - were tortured in a **perpetual punishment!**" Thus, aborted babies all go to the "wide place of mercy" alias Heaven - while their baptized but unrepenting abortive parents go to everlasting hell.

After 390 A.D.: magical baptism soon conquered the Church

Nevertheless, baptismal regenerationism was now about to triumph in church history right down till the Protestant Reformation. Soon Bishop Ambrose of Milan would claim that all early-dying unbaptized infants were lost (yet free from pain). They are lost, he stated, because "sin is forgiven by means of baptism" - and by baptism alone.

Thus, "we are renewed by means of the laver of baptism." For only "in baptism...all faults and sins are washed away." "Nobody ascends into the Kingdom of Heaven, unless through the sacrament of baptism.... No infant, not even if prevented by some necessity."

Chrysostom argued even more extravagantly. God, he insisted, "saved us through the laver of regeneration.... It is also called baptism.... It is called circumcision.... If any man be effeminate, or a fornicator, or an idolator, or a doer of whatever ill you please, or if he be full of all the wickedness there is among men - should he [but] fall into this pool of waters, he comes up again from the divine fountain purer than the sun's rays."

The Metropolitan Bishop John Chrysostom then stated: "Without baptism, it is impossible to obtain the Kingdom." "We expound the doctrine of the laver [to candidates]; and, in asking, instruct them to know its power.... We are born again of the waters."

The sacramentalization of Augustine's views on infant salvation

Unfortunately, also the views even of the great Hippo-Regian Augustine on infant salvation - underwent increasing sacramentalization. At the beginning of his Christian Ministry, he rightly reacted against the view of the Manichees -- that matter as such (and hence even an unborn fetus) was intrinsically evil.

At that stage, the youthful Augustine similarly rejected the related view that the baptismal material was good intrinsically. That is, the view that water is good in itself - even without regard to God.

Later, Augustine reacted even more strongly - though again rightly. This time, it was against the Donatist heresy that forgiveness of sin was contingent upon being baptized by a godly Minister of a congregation the Donatists regarded as a pure church.

Finally, Augustine reacted most strongly of all - against the heresy of Pelagius. The latter wrongly denied the hereditary transmission of the first sin of Adam.

Pelagianism thus insisted that infants had none of Adam's guilt - and therefore did not need to be forgiven. It accordingly held - albeit only incidentally, yet nevertheless quite rightly so - that infant baptism does not regenerate.

Augustine unfortunately now **over**-reacted even against the latter truth. He not only rightly stressed the transmission of the guilt of Adam's first sin even to unborn babies. He also wrongly insisted that infant baptism itself wipes that guilt away.

The Manichaeans apparently believed that also prenatally, people's souls were essentially evil - prior to their being able to will, and even before the time of Adam. To this, Augustine had responded: "I could have inquired whether that evil kind of soul, before it was mingled with the good, had any will. For if not, it was [at that time] without sin and innocent - and so by no means evil."

However, when the Pelagians later tried to misuse this statement of Augustine's against him, he explained in his *Retractions* that infants "are held guilty not by propriety of will but by origin. For what is every earthly man in origin - but [like] Adam?" The will of the entire human race was in Adam - so that when Adam voluntarily sinned, the whole race voluntarily sinned.

In his celebrated volume *On Baptism Against the Donatists*, the great Augustine of Hippo antirebaptistically declared "the firm tradition of the Universal Church" to be that of unrepeatedly upholding "the baptism of infants." Such, "certainly, are as yet unable with the...mouth to make confession unto salvation. [Yet] even by crying and moaning when the [baptismal] mystery is performed upon them, [they] raise their voices.... No Christian will say that they are baptized to no purpose."

Further, in his *Three Answers to the Letters of Petilian the Donatist*, the shrewd Augustine asked that leading schismatic: "Tell me, to begin with, who there is that comes to baptism free from sin - with the single exception of Him Who came to be baptized not that His iniquity should be purged away but that an example of humility might be given us? Do you not hear the words of Scripture saying [Job 14:4f LXX] No one is clean from sin in Thy sight, not even the infant whose life is but of a single day upon the Earth?

"For whence else is it that one hastens even with infants to seek remission of their sins? Do you not hear the words of another Scripture [Psalm 51:5], In sin did my mother conceive me? "

At first, then, Augustine's views on these matters were mild. Later, however, his drawing their logical conclusions - and especially his antagonism toward Pelagius - made him harsher.

Yet, though he believed that even infants dying unbaptized would be punished everlastingly for their inherited guilt from Adam's sin - he also believed that their punishment would be both mitigated and tolerable. Indeed, this would be the case especially in respect of heathen infants.

Explained Augustine of Jesus: "He says it shall be **more** tolerable for Sodom [and Gomorrah] in the day of judgment" - than for covenantal cities like Bethsaida and Capernaum. Matthew 10:15 & 11:21f. He who...shall **not have baptized little children** who have only original sin, aggravates what [punishment] is theirs. Yet [he thus aggravates it only] by the **very lightest** future condemnation."

Augustine on the prebaptismal condition of unregenerate infants

Autobiographically, but also as a general description of all mankind, Augustine accurately described the dire condition of unregenerates (even when infants). "Before Thee," Augustine confessed to God, "none is free from sin - not even the infant which has lived but a day...."

"In the weakness of the infant's limbs, and not in its will, lies its innocency. I myself have seen and known an infant to be jealous, though it could not speak.... I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me [Psalm 51:5]. Where, I pray Thee, O my God -- where, Lord, or when, was I, Thy servant, innocent?"

Augustine rightly insisted that even infants need regeneration. Wrongly, he also insisted that baptism is necessary for regeneration. On the other hand, mercifully, he also believed that "whatever unbaptized persons die **confessing** Christ - this confession is of the same efficacy for the remission of sins as if they were washed in the sacred font of baptism."

Yet sadly, Augustine could not see how to apply this to unbaptized infants capable of trusting but incapable of thus **confessing** Christ! Hence he concluded: "No one...is clean in Thy sight, not even the infant whose life is of one day upon the Earth [Job 25:4]."

However, "those debts...have been forgiven unto us **in baptism** - through His peace." Thus, all guilt or "fault - the grace of God hath already remitted, through the laver of regeneration."

"For from the infant newly born to the old man bent with age...there is none who in baptism does not die to sin.... Infants die...to original sin...."

Infants are involved in the guilt of the sins not only of the first pair, but of their own immediate parents. For that divine judgment - "I shall visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children [Exodus 20:5 & Deuteronomy 5:9] - certainly applies to them before they come under the New Covenant by regeneration...."

"The second death [of only the reprobate in hell]...takes place when the soul [after being re-united within the resurrected body on Judgment Day] is not permitted to leave the suffering body...."

[Yet] the mildest punishment of all will fall upon those who have added **no actual sin** to the original sin they brought with them."

To the aged Augustine unbaptized infants seemed condemned to hell

Unexpurgated original sin, believed the aged Augustine in the final phase of his earthly insights, still clings prebaptismally to all who have not yet been baptized. Augustine was the first to teach the eternal (though mild) damnation of all early-dying unbaptized infants.

However, Augustine felt such infants would be beaten in hell with so few stripes it could not be said (as it **was** of the **adult** apostate Judas) that it would have been better for **them** not to have been **born**. Hence, in Augustine's view, Luke 12:48 refers also to infants. Yet Matthew 26:25 applies only to an **apostate adult**. See John 17:12.

Now Augustine was clearly wrong in assuming endless punishment for any unbaptized baby. *A fortiori*, he was even more wrong in assuming endless punishment for the early-dying unbaptized babies of **believing** parents.

Of course, Augustine drew the above-mentioned horrendous conclusion -- only because he wrongly equated **baptism** with **regeneration**. Nevertheless, nowhere were the implications of his views about this more clearly spelled out - than in his (412 A.D.) work *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins and on the Baptism of Infants*.

There, Augustine claimed it may "correctly be affirmed that such infants as quit the body without being baptized - will be involved in the **mildest** condemnation of all. That person, therefore, greatly deceives both himself and others - who teaches that they will not be involved in condemnation....

"**Infants** [of believers] ought to be baptized.... They [such infants] are rightly called **believers** - because they in a certain sense [during their baptism] profess faith by the words of their parents.... He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; while he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life - but the wrath of God abideth on him [John 3:36]. Now, in which of these classes must we place infants - amongst those who believe on the Son; or amongst those who believe not the Son?"

Augustine then answered the above question. "The Church...joins baptized infants to the number of the faithful.... [However,] they who have lacked the sacrament - must be classed amongst those who do not believe on the Son.... If they shall depart this life without this grace, they will have to encounter what is written concerning such. They shall not have life, but the wrath of God abideth on them."

On the one hand, added Augustine, we "ought not to doubt that even for infants yet to be baptized - that precious blood [of Christ] was shed." On the other hand, however - "infants, unless they pass into the number of believers through the [baptismal] sacrament which was divinely instituted for this purpose - will undoubtedly remain in this darkness....

"Inheritance is not bestowed upon them, except through baptism.... Inasmuch as infants are only able to become His sheep by baptism - it must needs come to pass that they perish if they are not baptized.... It is not only the Kingdom of Heaven but also the life which infants are not to have - if they have not the Son, Whom they can only have by His baptism.

"Even if holy children are propagated from the faithful [First Corinthians 7:14]," continued Augustine, "we hold that unless they are baptized, those go into damnation.... The holy children of believers and the unclean children of unbelievers are, notwithstanding their different circumstances, equally prohibited from entering the Kingdom of God - if they have not been baptized....

"The children of baptized persons, are [therefore themselves to be] baptized.... Therefore even an infant must be imbued with the sacrament of regeneration.... Nothing else is effected when infants are baptized, except that they are incorporated into the Church.... Unless this benefit has been bestowed upon them, they are manifestly in danger of damnation. Damned, however, they could not be - **if** they really had no sin."

Augustine versus Pelagius on the punishability of infants

In 418 A.D., Augustine referred to a now-lost writing - authored (before 410 A.D.) by the great British Theologian Morgan (alias Pelagius). The latter had argued anent Romans 5:12 that "if Adam's sin hurts those that do not sin themselves, then Christ's righteousness may profit those that do not believe.... For they are as much (nay more) saved by one, than they were previously dead by one.... If baptism does cleanse that old offence [or take away original sin] - then they that are born of parents both baptized, must be without this sin. For the parents could not transmit that which they had not" - or rather, that which they then no longer had.

Here, in part, the Briton Pelagius was quite right. If baptism indeed wipes out all original sin [as the Romanists allege], then there could be no original sin subsequently left in baptized parents thereafter to transmit to their offspring.

Unfortunately, Pelagius then drew wrong conclusions. Firstly, he wrongly denied the transmissibility of original sin. What he should have done - as the Protestants later did against Romanism - is to deny that both the guilt and the ongoing stain of imputed original sin is cancelled **specifically by baptism**.

Secondly, Pelagius wrongly taught that Christ's righteousness may profit also those who do not believe. Against this, however, the Bible itself declares: "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6. Thus, it is not unbaptized infants but rather faithless infants (and also faithless adults) who are displeasing to the Lord.

Yet, in his own *Pelagian Confession*, even the heretic Pelagius did at least add that "infants have redemption by the baptism of Christ." This can be seen in Augustine's *Eighty-ninth Epistle* (to Hilary). Of course, what both Pelagius and Augustine both should have said (but did not) - is that early-dying sinful yet believing infants have redemption through Jesus Christ alone, but independently of baptism.

Augustine's baptismal regenerationism was an overreaction to Pelagius

Augustine was right to expose Pelagius's denial of original sin and/or its transmissibility. But Augustine overreacted. For he also further insisted that only by being baptized personally, could original sin be cancelled at all.

Thus did Augustine refute Pelagianism in the former's own (415 A.D.) *Treatise on Nature and Grace against Pelagius*. There, he wrongly implied baptismal regenerationism.

Yet there, he also rightly re-affirmed Paul's words that "all have sinned - whether in Adam or in themselves - and come short of the glory of God" [Romans 3:23]. The entire mass [of Adamic humanity] therefore incurs penalty....

"If the deserved punishment of condemnation were rendered to all, it would without doubt be rendered righteously.... The man who correctly appreciated the whole subject, could not possibly blame the justice of God - [even] in wholly condemning all men whatsoever."

In his work *On Original Sin*, Augustine asked on what account...is an infant **rightly** punished with such ruin - unless it be because he belongs to the mass of perdition, and is properly regarded as born of Adam [and] condemned under the bond of the ancient debt unless [and until] he has been released from the bond (not according to debt but) according to grace?"

Indeed, Augustine then insisted with Job 14:4f that "no one is pure from uncleanness **what** uncleanness, pray, but that of sin? - not even the infant whose life is but that of a single day upon the Earth!" Cf. First Corinthians 7:14.

Furthermore: "Concupiscence of the flesh would be prejudicial...if the remission of sins were not so beneficial.... It [concupiscence] is present in men - both born [men], **and born again** [men]. In the former, it is prejudicial as well as present. But in the latter, [it is] simply present but never prejudicial. In the unregenerate, it is [even] prejudicial to such an extent indeed - that unless they are born again, no advantage can accrue to them from being born of regenerate parents....

"Toward the blessed consummation, advances are even now made by us -- through the grace of that holy laver which we have [had] put within our reach.... Thus, there is a whole and perfect cleansing in the self-same baptismal laver...of all the sins now remitted in our baptism."

In his (419 A.D.) work *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, St. Augustine explained that "they who are cleansed in the laver of regeneration, are redeemed from the power of the devil.... Those who have not yet been redeemed by such regeneration, are still captive in the power of the devil - even if they be infant children of the redeemed - unless they be themselves redeemed by the self-same grace of Christ....

"Infants are delivered, when they are baptized.... The devil's power is exorcised in infants.... They renounce him by the hearts and mouths of those who bring them to baptism.... Infants have committed no sin of their own" - a very specious presumption!

"Only original sin, therefore, remains. Thereby they are made captive under the devil's power, until they are redeemed therefrom by the laver of regeneration and pass into their Redeemer's Kingdom....

"The subject in hand, is about infants -- about human beings at their birth.... They are defined by us as guilty from the very first.... We declare them to be guilty -- since Christ died for them! And why did Christ die for them - if they are not guilty? ... Christ died even for infants....

We say that these same infants for whom Christ died, are guilty!" For the unrighteousness of Adam's first sin is imputed to each at his or her very conception.

A limbo for unbaptized babies firmly repudiated by Augustine

In his work *On the Soul and its Origin*, Augustine (in 419) repudiated the view of the heretic Victor - who consigned unbaptized infants to a limbo-like paradise but not to Heaven. Objected Augustine: "In what way shall an unbaptized person live in the house of God the Father - when he cannot possibly have God for his Father, except he be born again?"

Rebuking Victor, Augustine himself went on to say: "If you wish to be a Catholic, refrain from believing or saying or teaching that infants which are forestalled by death before they are baptized - may yet attain to forgiveness of their original sins! For the examples by which you are misled -- that of the thief who confessed the Lord upon the cross, or that of Dinocrates the brother of St. Perpetua - contribute no help to you in defence of this erroneous opinion!

"As for the thief.... He might have been sprinkled with the water which gushed at the same time with the blood out of the Lord's side, and hung on the cross next to Him - and thus have been washed with a baptism of the most sacred kind. What if he had been baptized [previously while yet] in prison, as in aftertimes some, under persecution, were enabled privately to obtain?" In that case, he may even have backslidden subsequently - until his re-repentance therefrom, when dying on the cross. "Beyond doubt, his faith and piety appeared to the Lord clearly in his heart - as they do to us in his words....

"As for Dinocrates..., the account itself that we have of him does not occur in that canon of Holy Scripture." However, it is upon the Bible alone that we should rely - "whence, in all questions of this kind, our proofs ought always to be drawn."

Augustine opposed not only a limbo for unbaptized adults. He opposed also the new notion of an intermediate limbo - especially for unbaptized infants. For Matthew 25:34-46, he rightly felt, precludes any such middle state. In this matter, he followed the (418 A.D.) Synod of Carthage, which condemned the consigning of unbaptized deceased infants postmortally neither to Heaven nor to hell but instead to yet another everlasting state.

Carthage had declared: "Whosoever denies that infants newly from their mother's wombs should be baptized" - let him be anathema! Or whosoever says that baptism is for remission of sins but that they [babies] derive from Adam no original sin (which needs to be removed by the laver of regeneration)...., let him be anathema....

"If anyone should say that the saying of [Jesus Christ] the Lord ~~In~~My Father's house are many mansions is to be understood as meaning that in the Kingdom of Heaven there will be a certain middle place or some place somewhere in which infants live in happiness, who have gone forth from this life without baptism (without which they cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven which is eternal life) - let him be anathema!

"For, after our Lord has said ~~Except~~ a man be born again of water and of the Holy Spirit he shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven - what Catholic can doubt that he who has not merited to be co-heir with Christ, shall become [instead] a sharer with the devil?"

Augustine then sarcastically alleged: "There is [suddenly] a new thing in the Church previously unheard of.... There is everlasting salvation outside the Kingdom of Heaven, outside the Kingdom of God!"

According to Augustine Jesus repudiated limbo in John 14:1-6

Again, in his comments on John 14:1-6, Augustine of Hippo added: "Every Christian heart therefore must utterly reject the idea of those who imagine that...there will be some place outside the Kingdom of Heaven which shall be the abode of those blessed innocents who have departed this life without baptism.... It is not the true and catholic faith." John 14:6.

In his (420 A.D.) work *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, Augustine condemned the viewpoint "that infants can be endowed with the rewards of eternal life even without the grace of baptism" - as [being] "excessively silly.... They who maintain this as being theirs without regeneration, appear to me to wish to destroy baptism itself - since they proclaim that these have that which we believe is not to be conferred on them without baptism....

"Infants have not life, without Christ's baptism.... Infants who are not baptized, cannot have life.... Baptism, therefore, washes away indeed all sins - absolutely all sins.... For if anyone should ask of me whether we have been saved by baptism, I shall not be able to deny it. Since the apostle says [in Paul's Epistle to Titus 3:5], He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Augustine on grace given to the children of unbelievers

Notwithstanding the above defence of baptismal regenerationism, Augustine still made a very different and an extremely profound statement in one of his very last works - his (427f A.D.) famous writing *On Grace and Free Will*. There, he rightly insisted that "there is no prevenient merit. Otherwise, the grace would no longer be grace. Sometimes too this **grace** is **bestowed** upon the **children of unbelievers**...by reason of God's secret providence....

"You must refer the matter, then, to the hidden determinations of God.... You see in one and the same condition, such as [that which] all infants unquestionably have who derive their hereditary evil from Adam - that one is assisted so as to be baptized; and another is not assisted, so that he dies in his very bondage.... One baptized person is left and forsaken in his present life - who God

foreknew would be ungodly.... Another baptized person is taken away from this life - lest wickedness should alter his understanding."

This certainly teaches that some baptized persons are still lost. It also seems to suggest that some of the unbaptized - especially such as die in infancy - might nevertheless be saved.

Remarkable too in this regard, is Augustine's discussion of the slaughter of the unbaptized infants mentioned in Matthew 2:16. For that description is not easily reconcilable with Augustine's erroneous theory of baptismal regenerationism. "Herod feared and...slew the children," wrote Augustine. "He[rod] destroyed the innocents.... He[rod further] crowned for Christ...the children dying for Him!"

Consequently, Warfield rightly pointed out that St. "Augustine's theology of grace...places man in the hands of an all-merciful Saviour and not in the grasp of a human institution." Thus in later times "men have come to see that, in the salvation of all who die in infancy, the invisible Church of God embraces the majority of the human race."

Sober assessment of Augustine on infant salvation

We ourselves certainly agree with Augustine that all unregenerates (regardless of their age at their death) will be punished in hell forever. We agree with him that there are different degrees of punishment there. We agree with him that there is no limbo at all, somewhere in between Heaven and Hell - whether for infants, or for anyone else. Indeed, we also agree with him that all tiny regenerates who die such - then go straight to glory.

However, we disagree with Augustine that regeneration can take place only during baptism. We disagree with him that some, dying in infancy, should be assumed to have died unregenerate - just because they indeed died unbaptized. On this, see my own M.Div. dissertation: *Baptism Does Not Cleanse!*

Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff rightly stated: "the damnation of unbaptized infants...is nowhere taught in the Holy Scriptures - and is repugnant to every unperverted religious instinct.... The third canon of the North African Council at Carthage in 418, which condemns the opinion that unbaptized children are saved, is in many manuscripts wanting and is therefore of doubtful authenticity."

The City of God speaks about Melchisedec. There, Augustine ventures the conjecture that God may have, also among the Gentiles, an elect people - true Israelites according to the spirit, whom He draws to Himself through the secret power of His Spirit.

One might therefore well wonder what Augustine might further have written - if it had not been for his arch-opponent Pelagius's vehement denial of the transmission of Adam's original sin also to infants. It is quite possible that the over-reacting Augustine could then well have ended up affirming the ability of God's great grace to save sin-tarnished fetuses and infants stained with the inherited guilt of Adam's transgression of the covenant - even when dying unbaptized.

Summary of the Early Church's teaching on infant salvation

We have seen above that the Early Church does seem to have presumed the salvation of early-dying infants. Indeed, while condemning abortion outright, she assumed that the aborted babies even of the wicked go to glory in the hereafter.

The Paedobaptist Irenaeus assumed that Christ's incarnation sanctified infants even before their births. Similarly, the Alexandrian Paedobaptist Clement believed God saves also babies.

As long as the semi-Montanizing Tertullian novelly opposed infant baptism, he also opposed outright sacramentalism. The latter was developed around A.D. 251f - largely by Cyprian the Carthaginian who fathered the false and bad view now called baptismal regenerationism. Yet even after him, the great Gregory of Nyssa still advocated prebaptismal regeneration. According to Warfield, Gregory even believed that the death of dying babies is for their own good.

Only after 350 A.D., did baptismal regenerationism become epidemic. Even then, the so-called *Vision of Paul* still alleged that aborted infants go to Heaven. Yet a magical view of baptism soon conquered the Church. Thus, even Augustine sacramentalized his own view of infant salvation - and regarded the unbaptized as unregenerate.

When an old man, Augustine thought unbaptized infants were condemned to Hell. His last baptismal views were overreactions against the heresies of Pelagius. Yet, following John 14:1-6, Augustine still firmly repudiated any idea of a limbo outside of Heaven for unbaptized babies. Indeed, any sober assessment of Augustine should certainly recognize he still believed that saving grace could be given to the children even of unbelievers.

V. THE DEFORMED CHURCH ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this chapter, we shall note the views in the Deformed Church anent the salvation of early-dying infants. After the heretic Pelagius denied the transmission of original sin to infants, in spite of all of Augustine's protests, even the Western Church for a while (but especially the Eastern Church) would adopt Semi-Pelagian views.

True, the Eastern Church would often settle for the mere loss of the beatific vision of God - as regards early-dying unbaptized babies. Yet especially under its perversion of the ongoing baptismal regenerationism of the influential Augustine, the Western Church would later develop the dreadful doctrine of infant damnation - especially during the Middle Ages.

Outside or on the very fringe of the Church Catholic in the West, it was especially Pietro Waldo and later John Wycliffe who would question baptismal regeneration and reject the doctrine of infant damnation. Rome, however, would react sharply to those Pre-Reformers --and propound her own views on infant damnation, down to the time of the Reformation.

Under the wholesome influence of Protestantism, later Romanists right down to the present day would often considerably soften their doctrines. For Wycliffe's views on the salvation of unbaptized early-dying infants would impact not only on Huss and Luther.

To a much lesser extent, those views would impact even on the Romish Counter-Reformation itself. Yet, by and large, the unreformed and continuing Deformed Church - would thereafter keep on clinging to the substance of its sacramentalism also as regards infant salvation.

The Pelagian denial of the inheritance of original sin

We must now again refer to the heresy of Augustine's most vehement opponent, Pelagius. The everlasting punishment of at least some infants (if such is indeed to be the case) - Pelagius agreed with Augustine - would be extremely mild.

Against Augustine, however, Pelagius did not see how even baptized babies could get to Heaven. For Pelagius believed it is (in part) only through one's own personal good works that one can earn one's way to glory.

Pelagius denied infants had any inherited original sin needing to be washed away. Possibly, no early-dying infant, whether baptized or not, would be punished at all. Said he: "Whither they may not go [*viz.* to Heaven], I know; whither they may go [*viz.* elsewhere], I do not know."

Augustine was sure **baptized** babies and other persons who really believed, after their death went to Heaven; but not the unbaptized. But Pelagius - to avoid saying that any early-dying children were lost - distinguished between the blessedness of everlasting life in general (which even babies could receive) and the blessedness of Christians (which only forgiven sinners alias penitent **adults**, in his view, could ever inherit).

To Pelagius, infant baptism signified only sanctification - but not at all also the forgiveness of sins. Augustine rightly said of the Pelagians: "They assert that there is no evil in infants from which they [*viz.* all infants] should be delivered...."

"The Catholic Faith...says to the Pelagians: The infant that you look upon "was conceived in iniquity; and in sin its mother nourished it in the womb" [Psalms 51:5].... No one is pure from uncleanness - not even the infant whose life is of one day upon the Earth [Job 14:4 *LXX*]."

Eastern and Western teaching on infant salvation after Augustine

The dominance of baptismal regenerationism now led to over-emphasizing the importance of being baptized - objectively. It also led to under-emphasizing the importance of believing - subjectively. Most strangely, however, it did not prevent the demise of the Early-Mediaeval Church into Semi-Pelagianism - temporarily in the West, and even longer in the East.

Originally, it had been obvious that especially the adult baptizee should (in the eyes of the Church) indeed seem to have come to faith, before being approved for baptism. Yet the new view of the Middle Ages now required the construction that Christ-trusting unbaptized adults such as Ex-Jews and Ex-Muslims, requesting they be baptized, could not yet have been born again - seeing regeneration was now imagined to take place only during baptism. This construction *ipso facto* involved a rejection of the teaching of Holy Scripture that faith does not precede but can only succeed regeneration. Indeed, now, for the first time, it was bluntly denied that an unbaptized child - yes, even an unbaptized child of the covenant with two Christ-loving baptized parents - could possibly already have a childlike faith in Christ.

Augustine died in 430 A.D. His views that unbaptized infants would suffer some sort of positive pain - were followed by many in the West. In this matter, they even went quite beyond Augustine. In the West, the strongest expressions of woe anent unbaptized infants were uttered - by Alcinus Avitus (who died in 526); by Fulgentius (who died in 533); and by Gregory the Great (who died in 604).

In the more Semi-Pelagian East, however, most of the Greek fathers viewed these children dying unbaptized as suffering nothing at all - except the deprivation of the beatific vision. Yet even in the West, at least the possibility of heavenly salvation even without baptism still persisted - and certainly as regards those who died **before** Calvary.

Thus, Leo the Great (400-61 A.D.) wrote that "when the wise men had returned to their own land...Herod's madness blazes out.... He orders all the little ones in Bethlehem to be slain.... But that which the wicked king removes from the World, Christ admits to Heaven."

Yet infants dying **after** Calvary, were usually regarded differently. That was inconsistent. For the blood of the Lamb of God in fact availed for elect infants even from the time of Adam onward. Genesis 3:15 & Second Samuel 12:13-24 cf. Matthew 18:1-14.

However, the same Leo apparently forgot the situation of early-dying infants during Old Testament times. For he also explained that because "through the transgression of the first man

the whole stock of the human race was tainted - no one can be set free from the state of the old Adam save through Christ's sacrament of baptism."

Consequently, even laypersons were "to succour those who are in danger. This, he said, they could do - *inter alia* by administering baptism to them at any time."

Gregory the Great (the first Bishop of Rome to be called sole pope alias universal father) made a solemn declaration in his *Moral Exposition* on Job chapter 16. "Some," he asserted, "are taken from this present life before they come to have any good or ill deserts by their own deeds...."

"Having not the sacrament of salvation [alias baptism] for their deliverance from original sin - though they have done nothing of their own here, yet are they come *ad tormenta*" (unto torments). Indeed, a little thereafter, Gregory even added: *perpetua tormenta percipiunt* (they undergo eternal torments).

What is even more remarkable is that even as late as the middle of the ninth century, Archbishop Hinckmar of Rheims expressed the hope that "the faith and godly desire of the parents and godfathers" of infants dying unbaptized "who in sincerity desired baptism for them but obtained it not - may profit them by the gift of Him Whose Spirit (Who gives regeneration) breathes where He pleases." Sadly, however, this was neither official Romish doctrine nor unofficial Romish belief.

For the Early-Mediaeval Roman Catholic Church now officially held that none dying unbaptized - even during infancy - could get to Heaven. Some Romish Theologians said that the unbaptized dead actually go to hell (yet to a special place in it where the suffering is mild). Others held they go to an everlasting limbo - where, though painless, they will still never know the joys of Heaven.

Explains the renowned Swiss-American Reformed Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff: "The strict Roman Catholic dogma, first clearly enunciated by St. Augustine (though with reluctant heart and in the mildest form), assigns all **unbaptized** infants to hell - on the ground of Adam's sin and the absolute necessity of baptism for salvation.

"A dogma *horribile*, but *falsum*. Christ, Who is the truth, blessed **unbaptized** infants and declared, To such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven

"Scarcely any teaching of St. Augustine (and Thomas Aquinas) arouses so much revolt in the Christian theology of this age, as the teaching about the future estate of unbaptized children dying in infancy. These Romish Theologians agree in denying to them all hope of future bliss. They are detained in hell for the sin of Adam, being in no wise bound to Christ in His passion and death by the exercise of faith and love (as the baptized and the patriarchs of the Old Testament are).

"The sacrament of...baptism not being applied to them, they are [all] forever lost. Baptism liberates from original sin, and without baptism there is no salvation. The doctrine of the sacraments as expounded by Thomas is, in all particulars, the doctrine of the Catholic Church" (by which Schaff means the Church of Rome alias the Papacy).

The dreadful doctrine of infant damnation in the Late-Mediaeval Church

The twelfth-century Peter Lombard supposed that unbaptized babies suffer misery in the hereafter. To Lombard, this was a punishment for original sin.

The Dominicans located lost infants in an indeed fireless subterranean region. The Franciscans located them in a place with some degree of light, above the Earth. The later Council of Trent here refused to take sides, yet affirmed the necessity of baptism.

At the end of the twelfth century, Alanus ab Insulis (alias Alain de Lille) confidently declared that "baptism was instituted against the wound of original sin." Yet even early in the thirteenth century, Hugo of St. Victor could not decide anent the eternal destiny of unbaptized babies of Christian parents suddenly slaughtered by pagan attackers.

Cardinal Bonaventura apparently felt that divine justice would keep unbaptized babies, growthlessly, in a joyless yet painless state of eternal suspended animation. Duns Scotus, however, exempted the unborn from hell - but only if their mothers were martyred.

Then Thomas Aquinas classified five distinct regions or *receptacula animarum*, for departed human souls. Those regions, he believed, are: Heaven; Hell; Purgatory; *Limbus Patrum* alias the temporary abode of the Old Testament saints; and *Limbus Infantum* alias the permanent abode of every unbaptized child dying during infancy. The latter limbo for infants was supposed to be below the limbo of the patriarchs. Indeed, even the so-called masses performed by priests in the Deformed Church here on Earth to alleviate the sufferings of the faithful in purgatory - were admitted to be of no avail for the unbaptized infants in limbo.

According to Thomas, infants dying in their mother's womb do not enjoy the beatific vision in Heaven. At the same time, they do not suffer from what is called the pain of sense. They enjoy a real happiness which consists not in the vision of God which grace alone makes possible, but in the natural love and knowledge of God. At the same time, while their damnation is the lightest of all (*omnium levissima*) - they still suffer, forever unchanged, the punishment of everlasting death (*supplicium mortis aeternae*).

It is solely "through baptism," Thomas insists, that "children are liberated from original sin and from hell." For sacramental "baptism is the regeneration of man into spiritual life." "All sin is removed by baptism." "Nobody who is not a Member of Christ can attain salvation [and thus get to Heaven].... Nobody becomes a Member of Christ, except by baptism received either in fact or by desire."

The baptismal reaction of Rome to the Pre-Reformers

The great Pre-Reformers Waldo and Wycliffe and Huss, and later also Savonarola, were evangelicals who either explicitly or implicitly raised questions about the evil doctrine of baptismal regenerationism. Yet Rome herself would not follow either Waldo or Wycliffe or Huss. She rather kept on clinging to her own false tradition.

Thus Dante Alighieri, in his famous *Inferno*, followed Thomas Aquinas - by himself too consigning unbaptized babies to an infernal infant realm of "sorrow without torment." Indeed, the very important Romish Church Councils of Lyons, Constance and Florence -- and later even Trent itself - all quite definitely declare that unbaptized infants are everlastingly confined to limbo.

Mercifully, the French theologian John Gerson told the 1414-18 Council of Constance (which burnt the Wycliffite Pre-Reformer Huss) that God can sanctify even unborn children and also hear the prayers of their parents.

So Gerson advised "women great with child and their husbands to use their prayers for their infant that is not yet born." They were then to pray that if the baby die before he or she "came to the grace of baptism with water - the Lord Jesus would vouchsafe to sanctify it beforehand."

But the 1438-45 Council of Florence nevertheless decreed: "The souls of those who pass away in mortal sin or in original sin alone, descend immediately to hell - yet to be punished with unequal punishments." So too the later Perrone: "Children of this kind descend into hell, or incur damnation."

Rome on infant damnation at the time of the Reformation

Yet Cardinal Cajetan - following Durand, Bonaventure and Gerson - believed that the prayers of parents could secure the justification of such unbaptized infants as die prenatally. He said "that the desire of the parents is in such case of necessity sufficient for their salvation."

The 1545f Romish Council of Trent, however, thoroughly disapproved. Indeed, Pope Pius IV ordered all such views expunged from Cajetan's books.

But the 1570 Cassander still encouraged parents to hope and pray for unborn children dying unbaptized. So too the 1768 Bianchi - who held such may be saved by the sacrifice of the child which not so much Christ but rather the child's mother makes to God!

Also Amort taught that prayer might move God to justify the child - extrasacramentally. Furthermore - just like Klee - even De la Marne (rightly) supposed the prenatally-dying child "shut up in the mother's womb may know God; love Him; and have the desire for baptism."

However, the famous Cardinal Robert Bellarmine supposed unbaptized babies suffer misery - as a punishment for original sin. Yet he located them as it were in the nursery of hell - on the top floor and away from the fire, "at a higher place of the inferno so that the fire does not reach them."

The Jesuit Professor Dionysius Petavius adjudged that the Council of Florence had determined the punishment of unbaptized infants to be the same in kind (in the same hell) with that of adults in mortal sin. "Infants," held Petavius, "are tormented with unequal tortures of fire - but are tormented nevertheless."

Hence, Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield rightly concludes that "the whole troupe of schoolmen unite...in assigning to infants dying unbaptized...the loss of Heaven." Indeed, among mediaeval Romish Schoolmen, only "a single Theologian of eminence can be pointed to who ventured still to teach the [sovereign grace] doctrine of Augustine [of Hippo] and Gregory [the Great] - Gregory Ariminensis."

This Gregory Ariminensis apparently believed, and quite rightly, that the sovereign God could save infants without the sacrament(s). In this, he was altogether exceptional within the mediaeval Catholic Church. For other Romanists - themselves being rigid baptismal regenerationists - called him *tortor infantum* alias the torturer of infants. For they believed this sacramental laxity plunged early-dying unbaptized infants into everlasting torment.

Modern Romish discussions on the damnation of infants

After the Protestant Reformation and, indeed, by way of one of a number of possible reactions thereto - Rome's very influential Cardinal Sfondrini maintained that unbaptized early-dying infants enjoy as much happiness as they can. Mercifully, the **desire** for baptism - even on the part of unborn children themselves - more and more now became regarded as equivalent to baptism. Indeed, it seems that the Cardinal (heretically) even denied the propagation of original sin to - and of any punishment for - unbaptized infants.

Rome had now been checked in its headlong plunge - also as regards the destiny of unbaptized early-dying infants - by the sobriety of the Protestant Reformation. Thenceforth, also the rather reactionary Romish Counter-Reformation would help bring the Papists at least halfway back to their senses.

Modern Romanist writers have elaborated on this matter in a whole variety of ways. Those ways range from asserting a more favourable everlasting destiny for the infants of pagans than for the infants of Romanists - to the point of eliminating the possibility of any unbaptized babies ever going to hell.

Growing out of the development of the doctrines of ignorance and invincible ignorance as defined by Pope Pius IX in 1863, many Romish Theologians became almost ready to discriminate against the infants of Christians - and in favour of pagan infants.

Thus, in his *Letters to the Duke of Norfolk*, the renowned Cardinal Newman insisted on the absolute necessity for baptism as regards the parents of Romish infants - even if they die in the womb. On the other hand, since the law of baptism is only in force where it is known, and even a morally invincible ignorance (as among heretics) is regarded as true ignorance - not even an intention of baptism is demanded of the heathen, or of certain sectaries.

Also Gousset *Dogmatic Theology* (Paris 1866) stated that "among the heathen their expiatory rites are probably still valid. For St. Bernard says: Among the Gentiles who are found faithful...the adults are expiated by faith and the sacrifices. But the faith of the parents profits the children - nay, even suffices for them. "

Hence, Gousset concludes: "If the fathers are saved, why not the children? *A fortiori* - might not a Christian's infant dying in the womb be said to be invincibly ignorant? Why need the law of baptism be so inflexibly extended to it?"

Yet, even in 1929, Romanists such as Dr. John P. Murphy were still maintaining "that infants dying in their mother's womb do not enjoy the beatific vision in Heaven. At the same time, they do not suffer from what is called the pain of sense...."

"The sacrament of baptism in reality or in desire (charity) is necessary as a means of salvation.... We shall act very prudently in believing that the implicit desire, where nothing more is possible, is sufficient."

The Romanist Professor Dr. B.V. Miller insisted in 1928 that unless a man be born again of **water**...he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.... The beatific vision is the full flowering of grace.... Where, however, the bud has not formed - no flower can bloom. On the other hand, there is no ecclesiastical authority for the opinion, now almost universally rejected, that the child who dies unbaptized suffers any pain of sense - that is: any positive punishment such as is inflicted upon those who die with unforgiven, actual, moral sins upon their souls....

"It is most probable that the state of unbaptized children in the next world is one of peace and natural happiness.... These considerations may bring [at least] some little consolation to the Catholic mother, grieving over the fate of her child who has died unbaptized."

Also in 1928, Abbot Dr. D.A. Vonier added (perhaps somewhat more cheerfully) that "it is not at baptism [but] it is at birth [or even at conception] that every child of Adam is handed over to the keeping of an angel. Great as is the Christian faith in the privileged state of those that are baptized in Christ, it never made the guardianship of the angel an exclusive privilege of the regenerate.... Christian tradition has always been emphatic in admitting the universal guardianship of all men - because all men are, at least potentially, the children of God."

Wycliffe and the British Pre-Reformation on the fate of unbaptized infants

Even earlier during the Middle Ages, when Rome painted a frightful future for even unbaptized babies after their infant deaths, there were still groups outside the Romish Church Universal, like the Waldensians. They professed that God justified even unbaptized infants.

Yet apart from such groups, for some seven subsequent centuries after the elevation of the Bishop of Rome to the position of pre-eminent Pope - the Romish Church herself remained in darkness. Indeed, it was not until the Pre-Reformation that one sees the first significant ray of light anent infant salvation beginning to shine forth.

That occurred at the appearance of the great Englishman John Wycliffe (1329-84). For that Morning Star of the Protestant Reformation clearly expressed his unwillingness to regard as damned such infants dying without baptism as their parents were intending to get baptized.

Summary of the Deformed Church's teaching on infant salvation

In this chapter, we have taken a look at the Deformed Church's view anent the salvation of early-dying infants. Even more than did Augustine, especially the Western Church overreacted to the Pelagian denial of the transmission of original sin to infants from their very conception onward.

This soon led to the dreadful doctrine of infant damnation in the Mediaeval Western Church. It did so, in spite of the protests of first Waldo and later Wycliffe.

There was indeed yet later even a further baptismal overreaction of Rome to those Pre-Reformers. Thus Rome maintained a rigid view anent the damnation of unbaptized infants. Indeed, she continued to do so - right down to the very time of the Protestant Reformation.

Fortunately, Protestantism then to some extent brought Catholicism to its senses - as seen in modern Romish discussions on the damnation of infants. For the views of Wycliffe on the salvation of unbaptized early-dying infants influenced not just Huss and Luther but, indirectly, even the Romish Counter-Reformation.

Those views of John Wycliffe were soon taken over in Bohemia by the Wycliffite, Jan Huss. A century later, the perspectives especially of these two men mightily impacted on those of the great Protestant Reformer - Martin Luther.

VI. THE REFORMATION ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this chapter, we shall closely look at the Pre-Calvinian Protestant Reformation - on the subject of the salvation of early-dying infants. We shall see the Early Luther stressing the need for solid faith even within unbaptized infants - yet also insisting that the Great Commission requires infant baptism. We shall then note the theme of infant salvation in both the "Unvaried" 1530 and the 1540 "Varied" *Augsburg Confession*.

Next, we shall take a look at Classic Lutheranism on the salvation of the infants of heathen; at Gnesio-Lutheranism on the baptism and salvation of infants; and at infant salvation among some of the later Lutherans. We shall then turn to Ulrich Zwingli as to the salvation of all early-dying infants, noting his righteous hatred of baptismal regenerationism. Last, we shall note the views on the salvation of early-dying infants expressed by Bullinger and Musculus.

Luther on the position of unbaptized infants

In our own Introduction above, we already saw from his *Commentary on Genesis* (17:14) that Luther - opposing the monstrous theory of baptismal regenerationism - insisted that the uncircumcised babies of Hebrews formerly and the unbaptized babies of Christians today could be justified without receiving either of such sacraments. Indeed, as early as 1519, he published his *Treatise on the Holy Sacrament of Baptism* - where he set out to correct the false mediaeval theory of *opus operatum*.

At that time, Luther's principal concern was to demolish the magical Romish view of baptismal regenerationism. Thus, there and then, he very rightly insisted that "they greatly err who think that through baptism they have become wholly pure.... **Faith**, in turn, removes the hindrance to the operation of baptism. So much depends on faith!"

It is true that in his 1520 writing titled *The Infernal Evil*, Luther certainly assumed that even the **infants** of ignorant infidels suffer in hell - on the basis of the way Luther then understood Luke 10:12f & 13:1f and Matthew 10:15 & 11:21f. Yet he also even then believed that such infants suffer not nearly as much in hell as do apostate adult baptizees.

Nor, Luther then believed, do the unbaptized babies of ignorant and unbaptized infidels - who never at any time belonged to the Christian Church - suffer in hell as much as do the unbaptized infants of baptized apostates. By the latter, Luther here meant those very knowledgeable yet damnably-backslidden parents who - precisely out of their own contempt for the Christian religion already extremely well-known to them, and from which they themselves had now turned away - yet deliberately leave unbaptized all their babies subsequently born to them.

Explained Luther [to Christians in covenant with God]: "The first...of the evils beneath us, is death; and the other, is hell.... Death and misery are held up to us by Christ - as in a mirror in which we may behold what we have deserved.

"For it is said in Luke thirteen, when they told Him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, that He replied: Do you suppose that **these** Galileans were sinners **above** all the [other] Galileans, because they [the former group] suffered these things? I tell you, **No!** But unless **you** repent, you [too] shall all likewise perish

"Moreover, we must include here the many infidels, Gentiles, Jews **and infants** who - **if** to them [as Non-Christians] **had** been granted the [great] advantages that **we** [Christians] enjoy - would **not** now be in hell [as sadly indeed they **are**], but rather in Heaven." For then - in that case - **they** "would have sinned far less than **we**!

"For this mirror also does Christ set before us," continues Rev. Dr. Luther, "when He says in Matthew 11: Woe unto to you, [covenant city of] Chorazin! Woe unto you, [covenant city of] Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you **had** been done in [the pagan cities of] Tyre and Sidon, they **would** have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be **more tolerable** for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for **you!**

" And you, [covenant city of] Capernaum, lifted up toward Heaven - shall be **brought down to hell!** For if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in [the pagan city of] Sodom - it would have remained to this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be **more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment** - than for you! "

However, this does not imply that all unbaptized babies of believers - and still less that all unbaptized babies of unbelievers - are (because of their lack of baptism) necessarily lost. To Luther, provided the baby concerned is himself or herself a little believer - and provided further the baby intended to get baptized - the baby is justified. This Luther then believed to be so, even if the baby died unbaptized - and presumably even if the parents themselves are unbelievers.

The Great Commission requires infant baptism (thus Luther)

To Luther, the Great Commission clearly includes the baptism also of babies. For there - "he who believes...shall be saved." Mark 16:16.

Thus "Satan," explained Luther, "could not quench the power of baptism in little children.... The first thing in baptism to be considered, is the divine promise which says: he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved Unless this **faith** be present," Dr. Luther rightly remarked, "baptism will profit us nothing.

"Christ is content to have stated in the first part of this passage, he that believeth and is baptized - and in the second part, he that believeth not [shall be damned] - without again mentioning baptism.... It may, however, happen that one has faith **without** having been baptized."

Thus Mark 16:16 "must not be explained so narrowly, that a person not able to obtain baptism stands condemned by it.... The [chief] consensus of opinion has always been that if a person dies a believer while lacking baptism, he would not be condemned. For it might happen - concludes the Early Luther - that a person is a believer and, though desiring baptism, is overtaken by a sudden death."

By 1528, in his work *Concerning Rebaptism*, Luther had given a fuller treatment of baptism -- this time not against the Romanists but instead against the Anabaptists. For they had over-emphasized the subjective and depreciated the objective side of the sacraments.

Infant salvation in the "Unvaried" 1530 Augsburg Confession

Luther and Melancthon and others - when all still ' Early Lutherans' - drew up the *Augsburg Confession*. The German text was read out in public on 25th April 1530. That was the so-called *Invariata* text. The autograph was soon mislaid. Yet its text was standardized in 1531 - and then constantly improved, over the next decade.

The *Invariata* sets out the baptismal views of those exponents of Early Lutheranism. Opposing especially Anabaptism, it declares: "Of baptism, they [the ' Early Lutherans'] teach that it is necessary to salvation...and that children are to be baptized who by baptism...are received into God' s favour. They [the ' Early Lutherans'] condemn the Anabaptists who allow not the baptism of children, and [who antipaedobaptistically] affirm that children are saved without baptism."

At this point, the famous Swiss-American Reformed Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff - a Seminary Teacher of the German Reformed Church in the United States of America - makes an important observation. Here, explains Dr. Schaff, "the Anabaptists are expressly condemned...like heretics - for their views on infant baptism, and [on] infant salvation."

Yet as late as 1539, or just seven years before his death, it seems Luther was still rejecting the Romish *ex opere operato* view of baptism. Thus, in his writing *The Councils and the Church*, he insisted that "the holy sacrament of baptism" needs to be "rightly taught and believed" even as regards "the little children."

Of course, explains Luther, "the devil...wants ' the creature' [namely the baptismal water] to get new power and might [supposedly] - from his mummery.... The devil would have his jugglery and mummery endued with power, and do something supernatural. [Thus] ' holy water' is [supposed] to blot out sin" - according to Romanism.

Yet here, it is precisely the Anabaptists who **over-reacted**. Indeed, they did so - to the point of **downplaying** both the water **and** the written Word of God.

Luther explained this well. "When we began to teach by the Gospel that these outward things could not save men..., then [some] people...came to the [wrong] conclusion." The revolutionary Anabaptists, explained Luther, wrongly concluded anent "baptism (because it was external water); the Word (because it was outward human speech); the Scriptures (because they were outward letters) made with ink...[etc.] - that all these things were **nothing** at all.... Thus they devised the slogan, ' Spirit, Spirit, the Spirit must do it! The letter killeth!"

"Thus [the radical Anabaptist] Múnzer called us [Lutheran] Wittenberg Theologians, ' men learned in the Scriptures' - and [calls] himself, ' the man taught of the Spirit.' And many others followed his example. There you see how the devil had armed himself - and built up his barricades!"

For the barricading radical Anabaptists like Münzer - the revered heroes of the later Communists at their later barricades - revolutionarily **opposed** the anti-revolutionary Protestant Reformers. Rome represented reaction; the Anabaptists (like the later Communists), revolution; but only the Protestants, reformation!

The revolutionary Anabaptists wished to destroy infant baptism. The reactionary Romanists wished to perpetuate the false fallacy of the alleged baptismal regeneration of infants. But only reformatory Protestantism had rediscovered the apostolic doctrine of making infant baptism dependent on prebaptismal faith.

For it is he that **believes** and is baptized, that shall be saved. See Mark 16:16. "Repent, and be baptized! ... For the promise is unto you, and to your children!" See Acts 2:38f.

Melanchthon's 1540 "Varied" Augsburg Confession

Now Luther's right-hand man Melanchthon had been becoming more and more sympathetic toward Calvinism - alias perfected Protestantism or consistent Christianity. Throughout this process, he had constantly been trying to improve the original text of the *Augsburg Confession*. Apparently with at least the tacit concurrence of Luther himself, by 1540 Melanchthon had produced the *Confessio Augustana Variata*.

We shall call Philip Melanchthon's 1540 so-called *Variata* text of the *Augsburg Confession* - the creed of 'Mature Lutheranism.' Significantly, it seems to be this text which was often endorsed by Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin himself. He did so immediately in 1540 (the year of its first publication). He again did so some fourteen years later in 1554. He also did so in 1556, two years yet later. Finally, he again did so in 1557 - and not just once, but fully twice.

Indeed, Philip Melanchthon's *Variata* was also endorsed by many other 'Calvinist' Reformers - also after Calvin. Such included: Farel and Beza at the 1557 Conference of Worms; those at the Naumburg Conference of both Lutheran Princes and Reformed Princes in 1561; the Bremen Calvinists in 1562; Frederick III of the Palatinate; the Diet of Augsburg in 1566; John Sigismund of Brandenburg in 1614; and even the German Reformed (and other) Theologians, at the 1853 German Church Diet in Berlin.

The 1540 *Confessio Augustana Variata* of 'Mature Lutherans' and other Protestants differs from the 1530 *Invariata* - chiefly anent the Lord's Supper. Yet it also speaks "of baptism."

There, it declares "of baptism" that 'Mature Lutherans' (our own term) "teach it is necessary to salvation." It also teaches that "infants are to be baptized" -- who "by baptism...are received into God's favour." Those 'Mature Lutherans' further "condemn the Anabaptists, who allow not the baptism of children and affirm that children are saved without baptism and outside of Christ's Church." (Here, we ourselves have underlined the chief **baptismal** amendments of the *Variata* to the *Invariata*.)

As the German Reformed Church in America's great Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Schaff rightly observes, "the *Variata* is a friendly approach of Lutheranism towards the Reformed..."

[Philip] Melanchthon regarded the [*Augsburg*] *Confession* not as a fixed and binding creed, but as a basis for negotiation....

"He therefore kept improving it.... In the edition of 1540, he even embodied some doctrinal modifications -- in the desire of promoting the cause of truth.... Luther, who took similar liberty with the *Smalcald Articles*, expresses no judgment in his writings on [or concerning] these variations" of the *Augsburg Confession*. "But he must have known of them, and tolerated them as unessential - even those of 1540, which appeared six years before his death."

Schaff also declares that "Luther's view of [presumed] baptismal regeneration seems to be [rather] inconsistent with his chief doctrine of justification by faith alone." Yet Schaff also concedes that Luther (more consistently) further "says, It is not baptism which justifies any man or is of any advantage; but faith in that word of promise to which baptism is added. "

Classic Lutheranism on the salvation of the infants of heathen

According to the Lutheran Dörner and the Presbyterian Warfield, as regards Martin Luther's view anent the fate of heathen children, he himself "expresses the hope that the good and gracious God may have something good in view for them." Indeed, also certain other Lutheran Theologians "judged that we may cherish the best hope for their salvation.

"Here belong Dannhauer, Hulsemann, Scherzer, J.A. Osiander, Wagner, Musaeus, Cotta and Spener.... The great body of Lutherans - including such names as Gerhard, Calixtus, Meisner, Baldwin, Beckmann, Hoffmann [and] Hunnius - held that...such infants...must be left to the judgment of God."

Thus Hoffmann says: "On the question whether the infants of the heathen nations are lost, most of our [Lutheran] Theologians prefer to suspend their judgment. To affirm, as a thing certain, that they are lost - could not be done without rashness."

As that great contemporary conservative Lutheran and Dogmatician Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Pieper rightly notes: "Luther and the Lutheran Theologians appropriate Augustine's word: *Contemptus sacramenti damnat non privatio* [It is the despising but not the absence of the sacrament that damns]. They teach that while faith in the remission of sins purchased by Christ, or regeneration, is absolutely necessary -- baptism is not absolutely necessary, since this faith or regeneration can be brought about also by the Word of the Gospel alone."

Schaff even suggests that Melanchthon himself had come to doubt the infant damnation of the children even of heathen. It is true that the **original** German text of the *Augsburg Confession Invariata* had condemned "the Anabaptists" simply for teaching "that children are saved without baptism."

On the other hand, however, Melanchthon's **later** Latin edition of the 1540 *Variata* apparently indicates a shift in attitude. For, after the above original words "saved without baptism" it then added "*et extra ecclesiam Christi*" (meaning "and outside Christ's Church") - thus raising the possible salvation of the early-dying babies even of unbelievers.

These additional words "must refer to heathen infants," feels Schaff. Consequently, "this shows that Melanchthon was in doubt on the subject of the infant damnation" of the unbaptized infants of at least adult church members - which infants may very well themselves already have been little believers even in their own right.

However, the latter might be true of early-dying infants even among the pagans. For if the babies of heathen parents themselves come to faith in Christ before their infant deaths - whether or not their parents ever do - those dying babies might then be construed as having been **inside** Christ's Church even without baptism (*viz.* at least within His **Invisible** Church).

Professor Dr. Schaff continues: "The edition of 1540...called the *Altered Augsburg Confession (Variata)*...attracted little attention till after the death of Melanchthon (1560) - when it created as much trouble as the insertion of the *filioque* clause in the *Nicene Creed*. The *Altered Confession*...embodies the changes in Melanchthon's theology - which may be dated from the new edition of his *Loci Communes* (1535), and his personal contact with Bucer and Calvin.... The Calvinistic view...he inclined to."

Gnesio-Lutheranism on infant baptism and salvation

Continued Schaff: "The first [Gnesio-]Lutheran divine who publicly censured and condemned the *Variata*, was Flaccius [Matthias Illyricus], at the Colloquy of Weimar (1560). He was followed by...Chytraeus, Heshusius and others."

The latter would include Westphal, whom Calvin in one tract after the other accused of clinging to a magical if not a re-romanizing view of baptism. For Westphal **refused** to **presume** an already-accomplished **regeneration** in the baby - **before** the administration of infant **baptism**.

These were the so-called Late Lutherans. These were extremists, who hated both Calvinism and what they called the Crypto-Calvinism (of those whom we ourselves have termed Mature Lutherans) - apparently even more than they hated Romanism itself. Sadly, these later Gnesio-Lutherans captured control of the Lutheran State Churches after the 1580 adoption of the reconciliatory 1576-84 Pan-Lutheran *Book of Concord*.

The latter itself had by-passed the 1540 *Confessio Augustana Variata*. It had presented a text of the *Invariata*, in what it considered to be its 1530 form. Indeed, it had itself condemned "the view that infants...may without baptism...attain unto salvation" - as one of the "**Anabaptistic** Articles which cannot be endured."

Very sadly indeed. In their own 1592 *Saxon Visitation Articles*, Rev. Dr. Aegidius Hunnius and other Gnesio-Lutheran theologians further lashed out against the (Calvinistic) doctrines "that baptism does not work nor confer regeneration" - and "that salvation does not depend on baptism."

Worse yet. In the same breath, the *Saxon Visitation Articles* even actually **called** this "the false and erroneous doctrine of the **Calvinists** on Holy Baptism."

On the other hand, there is still an element of mitigation - even in the Gnesio-Lutheran Hunnius's *Saxon Visitation Articles*. Mercifully, even one of those *Articles* themselves expressly stated: "Unless a person be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. **Cases of necessity are not intended, however, by this.**"

Indeed, even Hunnius also wrote: "That the infants of Gentiles outside the Church are saved, we cannot pronounce as certain - since there exists nothing definite in Scripture concerning the matter. So neither do I dare simply to assert that these children are indiscriminately damned... Let us commit them, therefore, to the judgment of God."

Even among the Gnesio-Lutherans, Hunnius was not alone in maintaining the above view. According to Warfield, some of the other Gnesio-Lutheran Theologians too, just "like Hunnius, were inclined to believe that they [*viz.* the early-dying infants of pagans] will be saved."

Now the Calvinist Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff here compares the Lutheran to the Romish view anent the necessity for baptism. "The Roman Catholic Church teaches the necessity of baptism for salvation, and assigns...all unbaptized children to the *limbus infantum* (a border region of hell [alias the realm of the next life] alike removed from burning pain and heavenly bliss). Lutheran divines, who accept the same baptismal theory, must consistently exclude the unbaptized from beatitude - or [else otherwise] leave them to the uncovenanted mercy of God."

Lutherans do not, of course, believe there is an endless and joyless and painless limbo for unbaptized babies. Nor does Schaff so allege. He simply compares - and rightly so - the Lutheran view of baptism to the Romish view of baptism. For both systems very greatly exaggerate the dire importance of being baptized at all, at least as regards the determination of one's everlasting welfare.

Infant salvation in the view of some of the later Lutherans

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the great Lutheran Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. John Gerhard wrote: "Concerning infants born **out[side]** of the Church, we say with the Apostle (First Corinthians 5:12-13): For what have I to do with judging them that are **without** [alias outside of the Visible Church]? Do you not judge them that are **within**? For them that are without, **God** judgeth! "

Further, continued Gerhard: "Concerning infants born **in** the Church - we have **better** hope. Pious parents properly bring their children as soon as possible to baptism.... Those who are negligent in this..., shall hereafter render a very heavy account to God.... Yet neither can nor ought we rashly to condemn those infants who die in their mothers' wombs or by some accident, before they receive baptism."

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the crypto-calvinizing Lutheran Theologian Calixtus held to mere deprivation of benefits - for unbaptized infants. His opponent, the Gnesio-Lutheran Calovius, rejected this milder view. The Mature Lutheran Buddaeus, however, described the condition of even heathen infants as to some extent tolerable - though excluded from beatitude (alias deprived of the heavenly life).

According to Löscher, yet other later Lutherans left the children to the mercy of God. It is very significant indeed that even the hardline and anti-calvinistic Gnesio-Lutheran Quenstedt wrote at some length against the absolute necessity of baptism - in the way taught by the [some of the later] Church Fathers, the Scholastics, and the later Romish Theologians.

It is important to note that also the famous American Confessional Lutheran Rev. Professor Dr. Charles Krauth - in his famous book *Infant Baptism and Infant Salvation* - also seems to argue for the universal salvation of all those dying in infancy. This is very significant - especially when coming from an openly Anti-Calvinistic writer such as Professor Krauth.

Writes Krauth: "It is not the doctrine of our [**Lutheran**] *Confession* that any human creature has ever been or ever will be lost purely for original sin." "We cannot rise to a conviction...on the matter, but may attain to a ' well-grounded hope' based on our apprehension of God' s all-embracing mercy."

Nevertheless, the Calvinist Schaff concluded in 1876 that "the Lutheran Creed retains substantially the Catholic view of baptismal regeneration, and hence limits infant salvation to those who enjoy this means of grace. *Augsburg Confession*, art. IX: ' They condemn Anabaptists who...affirm that children have been saved without baptism' *etc.*"

At the same time, however, Schaff rightly concedes that Lutherans do recognize "some exception within the sphere of the Christian Church." Indeed, they make "the damnation of unbaptized infants as mild as the case will permit. At present, however, there is scarcely a Lutheran divine of weight who would be willing to confine salvation to **baptized** infants."

Ulrich Zwingli on the salvation of all early-dying infants

The views of Dr. Ulrich Zwingli in some respect contrasted with those of Luther and the Lutherans. For Zwingli firmly believed in the universal salvation of all early-dying infants.

Here he renewed and enlarged the views of Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa. In so doing, he also prepared the way for the similar views of Henry Bullinger, Peter Martyr, the Hodges, Shedd, and Warfield *etc.*

Zwingli traced infant salvation exclusively to divine election, on the basis of Christ' s atonement alone. For he held that Jesus "Christ is the only wisdom, righteousness, redemption and satisfaction for the sins of the whole World." Hence, it is a denial of Christ - when we confess any other ground of salvation and satisfaction.

Explained Dr. Zwingli: "Just as we were given over to death in the first Adam, we regain life in Christ the Second Adam. Thus, we certainly have **no ground to damn** children born to Christian parents - nor **even the children of the heathen**. For just as Adam was able to make the entire race unhappy through his sin - has Christ not, by His death, made the whole race alive?"

Zwingli next quoted First Corinthians 15:22. Then he declared: "May it [First Corinthians 15:22] be far from untrue - that ' as in Adam all die, in Christ **all shall be made alive!**' "But howsoever

one might think about the children of the heathen, we opine (on account of the salvation offered by Christ) that those judge falsely - who have declared them to be damned for ever.... The free election of God...does not follow faith; but faith follows it!"

Again, speaking specifically of the babies of infidels, Ulrich Zwingli insisted that "God' s election is hidden to us. If He has chosen them, we are judging too quickly about things which we do not know," if we reject them out of hand. "It is more probable that the children of the heathen are saved through Christ, than that they are damned."

According to Zwingli' s 1530*Works*: "To die [in infancy] is the sign of election.... Those who are reprobated or repudiated by God, do not die in this state of ' innocence' - but are preserved by Divine Providence [so] that their repudiation may be manifested by a wicked life." Again: "The infants of Christians...are not less to be...in the number of those whom we judge to be elect, than their parents."

Zwingli' s righteous hatred of baptismal regenerationism

Dr. Zwingli then rightly blasted the ' baptismal regenerationism' of his Romish opponents who everlastingly condemned early-dying unbaptized babies. He insisted that they "vehemently err in judging [or damning] infant children - whether [the children] of Gentiles [alias Heathen], or [whether the children] of Christians. Of Gentiles - because no law condemns them." Of Christians - because they and their infants are indeed to be deemed keepers of the covenant.

"The election of God is free. It is impious to exclude from it those of whom by these signs [of faith and unbelief] we are not able to determine whether they are in it or not."

Zwingli continued: "With reference to [the salvation of early-dying children] of Christians, however, we are not only intruding rashly into the election of God. But we are not even believing [in] His Word, by which He manifests this election to us.... He admits us into the covenant of Abraham. This word now renders us no less certain of their election, than formerly the Hebrews." Genesis 17:7-13.

Reformed Church Historian Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff rightly insists that Zwingli was here out "to emancipate the **salvation of children** dying in infancy - from the supposedly indispensable condition of water-baptism, and to extend it beyond the boundaries of the Visible Church (as distinct from the Invisible Church). This is a matter of very great interest, since the unbaptized children far outnumber the baptized, and [since unbaptized children alone] constitute nearly one half of the [entire human] race" – *viz.* at the time Schaff first wrote these words in 1876.

"He teaches repeatedly that all elect children are saved - whether baptized or not, whether of Christian or heathen parentage. Not on the ground of their innocence (which would be Pelagian), but on the ground of Christ' s atonement....

"All children, dying in infancy, belong to the elect - their early death being a token of God' s mercy, and hence of their election. A part of the elect are led to salvation, by a holy life - another part, by an early death....

"From the parallel between the first and the second Adam, he infers that all children are saved from the ruin of sin. Else, what Paul says would not be true - that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. First Corinthians 15:22!" Thus Schaff of Zwingli.

Also the famous Presbyterian Theologian Rev. Prof. Dr. B.B. Warfield here states that "there are many - adults and infants - of whose salvation we may be sure. But of reprobation [of any who currently seem to be unbelievers], we cannot be sure. Such adjudgment is necessarily unsafe, even as to adults apparently living in sin. While as to infants, who die and give no sign - it is presumptuous and rash in the extreme.

"From the beginning [of the Reformation] a few held with Zwingli that death in infancy is a sign of election, and hence that all who die in infancy are the children of God and enter at once into glory.... It has more lately become **the ruling view**" alias the general expectation.

The salvation of early-dying infants according to Bullinger and Musculus

Again according to Professor Warfield, also Rev. Professor Dr. John Henry Bullinger insisted: "I, trusting to God's mercy and His truth and undoubted promise, believe that infants departing out of this World by a too [un]timely death before they can be baptized - are saved by the mere mercy of God...through Christ Who saith in the Gospel Suffer little ones to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of God! "

Also according to Schaff, "the damnation of unbaptized infants dying in infancy...was justly denied...by Bullinger." Schaff adds that already "Zwingli...boldly asserted that all infants dying before committing actual sin - whether baptized or not, whether [or not] of Christian or heathen parents - are saved in consequence of the universal merit of Christ...which holds good until rejected by unbelief.... Bullinger held the same view."

Indeed, Bullinger actually wrote in the very first chapter of his 1566 *Second Swiss Confession* that "instruction in true religion depends on the inward illumination of the Spirit.... It is written... all men shall know Me, [from the least of them unto the greatest of them] (Jeremiah 31:34).... For He Who illuminates inwardly by giving men the Holy Spirit, the Self-same...said unto His disciples, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; (Mark 16:15).... We know, in the meantime, that God can illuminate whom and when He will, even without the external ministry [of preaching the Word or administering Baptism] - which is a thing appertaining to His power."

Also the German Reformed Theologian Wolfgang Musculus wisely stated that the "discrimination of elect and reprobate in newborn infants, is hidden from our judgment. It is not fitting that we should inquire into it, lest by ignorance we reject vessels of grace."

Summary of the Early Reformation's teaching on infant salvation

In this chapter, we have taken a look at the Pre-Calvinian Protestant Reformation on the subject of the salvation of early-dying infants. Thus, Luther believed that also infants require baptism

in terms of the Great Commission. Yet he also insisted that in Mark 16:16, the words "he that believeth" - are there more important than the words "and is baptized."

Against the Anabaptists, in the original 1530 (*Unvaried Augsburg Confession*), the Lutherans initially denied infant salvation to those who were unbaptized. However, Melancthon's 1540 (*Varied Augsburg Confession*) - apparently with the tacit approval or at least with no opposition from Luther himself - mitigated this. Consequently, Classic Lutheranism usually hesitated definitely to damn the early-dying infants of heathen.

Gnesio-Lutheranism, however - in over-reaction to both Calvinism and Crypto-Calvinistic Moderate Lutheranism - took a harder line. It tended to link not only faith but also even infant baptism itself with salvation. Yet, widescale and in some cases universal infant salvation increasingly became the view of many of the later Lutherans.

Ulrich Zwingli, on the other hand, believed in the universal salvation of all early-dying infants - on the basis of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. Zwingli rightly hated baptismal regenerationism. While still advocating infant baptism (against the Anabaptists), he believed it was totally unnecessary for the redemption of babies.

Dr. Zwingli's views anent the universal salvation of all early-dying infants deeply influenced Bullinger and Musculus. As we shall see in our next chapter, it now remained for John Calvin - in the light of the views of both the Lutherans and the Zwinglians - to adopt a yet-more-biblical perspective.

VII. JOHN CALVIN ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

This brings us to the views of quite the greatest of all Protestant Reformers: John Calvin, the genius of Geneva. Here, we shall give a very extensive treatment of the way he viewed early-dying infants - and more in particular those of unbelieving parents.

First, we shall see how Calvin perceived the congenital stain of Adam's first transgression alias original sin. Then, we trace his perceptions thereof from Adam's fall to Noah's flood.

Next, we shall note Calvin's emphasis upon the extremely adult-erous wickedness of man at the time of the deluge, and the way he saw original sin operate thereafter - from Noah's flood onward until God destroyed adulterous Sodom; and, later yet, until God punished the filthy fornicator and profane person Esau. Genesis 24:3 & 26:34f & 27:46 & 28:1f, compare Hebrews 12:16.

Then we shall examine whether Calvin, in commenting on Job, ever said that God sends pagan babies to hell. We shall also note Calvin's mention of especially the little children among the wicked Ninevites, in the Book of Jonah. Then we shall further look at Calvin's views concerning: the trustful babies at Isaiah 11:8f; the wicked children of the ungodly at Isaiah 14:21; and the children of the wicked in Jeremiah 19:3f.

Further, we shall note Calvin's view anent the slaughtered infants of wicked covenant-breakers in Ezekiel - and also anent "the little ones" in Zechariah 13:7. We shall then look at Calvin's views as to whether babies could be born again already after their conception but before they were born; as to the meaning of the lifted-up Christ saving 'whosoever trusts Him'; as to His coming to save the World (in John 3:15-21); and as to whether infants are exempted from God's abiding wrath (in John 3:36).

We shall then see the implications for Calvin of ignorant adults being punished with fewer stripes than knowledgeable adults; of Christ healing the daughter of a Canaanite woman; and of Him coming to seek and to save those that were lost. We will then note the Reformer's repeated denials of the justificatory need for baptism; his perceptions of the implications for infants of God's wrath as mentioned in Romans chapters one to eleven; and his views on the implication for infants of First Corinthians 7:14 & 15:21f; Ephesians 2:2f; and Hebrews 2:13.

We shall then look at Calvin's beliefs anent First John 3:7f, and anent children being saved before and without infant baptism. We shall inquire whether his perception that all children are tainted - necessarily presupposes his other views as to their unregenerate condition (or alternatively their regenerated status). We shall examine whether his view of the transmissibility of original sin could in his opinion stop infants from being regenerated. Then we shall ask whether Calvin believed that any early-dying infants of pagans go to hell.

We shall see whether Calvin ever said that reprobate infants die while still babies, and that the impiety of parents bars the salvation of their infants. Last, we shall look at his views against Servetus anent damning early-dying infants; at Paedobaptism as the seal of pre-existing infant faith; and at Castellio's charge that Calvin damned early-dying babies.

Calvin on the congenital stain of original sin before Noah's flood

Now Holy Scripture records that the fallen Adam ' begat a son in his own likeness.' Genesis 5:3, cf. 6:5f & 8:21 & 9:6

Here, Calvin comments²⁸⁹ that the "corruption and pollution" of our sinful human nature "by Adam through the fall, has flowed down to all his posterity. **If he had remained upright, he would have transmitted to all his children what he had received.** But now...Adam, who had **fallen** from his original state, could beget none but such as were **like himself.**"

Calvin next discusses the unholy **miscegenation** between the grown-up or **adult** children of the covenanters, and those of the ungodly - just before the flood. There, Calvin further comments²⁹⁰ that "**all mankind had been formed for the worship of God....**

"Therefore sincere religion ought everywhere to have reigned. Yet since the greater part had prostituted itself...it was fitting that the small portion which God had adopted by special privilege to Himself should remain separate from others.

"It was therefore base ingratitude in the posterity of Seth to mingle themselves with the children of Cain.... They [thus] voluntarily deprived themselves of the inestimable grace of God.... They were the sons of God by adoption whom He had set apart for Himself; while the rest remained in their original condition" of rebellion ever since the fall.

Thus the Sethites at length "formed illicit marriages after their own lust.... By mingling themselves with the wicked, they [thus] profaned the worship of God and fell away from the faith.... The universal pollution is more clearly evident from this, that the holy seed was defiled by the same corruption.... Afterwards, those who were born of promiscuous marriages imitated their example."

Throughout, all of the condemnation discussed above - applies only to the adult Cain and his adult descendants. Genesis 4:3-25 & 6:1-11 and First John 3:9-12. Nothing at all is here said about the everlasting postmortal destination of the early-dying children of the Cainites.

Calvin on the adult-erous wickedness of man at the deluge

Moses recorded how ' God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.' Genesis 6:5.

Comments Calvin:²⁹¹ "Iniquity had reached its highest point, and so pervaded the whole Earth that integrity possessed no longer a single corner.... The time for punishment had more than fully arrived....

"Moses has traced the cause of the deluge - to external acts of [sin] alias iniquity.... Moses teaches us that the mind of those concerning whom he speaks, was so thoroughly imbued with iniquity - that the whole presented nothing but what was to be condemned....

"It grew worse and worse, as time advanced.... It was not the folly of a few days, but the inveterate depravity which the children - having received as by hereditary right - transmitted from their parents to their descendants....

"How desperate had been the impiety, and how enormous the crimes of men - by which God was induced to destroy the whole world.... The whole human race was destroyed, except Noah and his family....

"Peter teaches that Noah' s deliverance from the universal deluge, was a figure of baptism. First Peter 3:21.... Noah - believing the promise of God - gathered himself, his wife and his children together: in order that...he might emerge out of death.

"So it is fitting that we should renounce the world...in order that the Lord may quicken us by His Word. For nowhere else is there any security of salvation!"

Once again, here Calvin does not say that the infants who drowned to death during the great flood - thereafter themselves went to hell. All indications are that Calvin either believed the opposite, or at the very least was not here even considering infants.

For the Apostle Peter himself says that the Spirit of Christ preached through the prophet Noah to the [obviously adult] spirits who had disobeyed God right before the flood, some of whom may well have repented even while later drowning to death in that deluge. First Peter 1:10-12 & 3:18-20 & 4:6 and Second Peter 2:5f (cf. Genesis 6:1-11). Nothing at all is said here about Noah preaching to infants, but only to adults - urging them to turn from their adult-erously miscegenating and violent ways.

Calvin' s comments on the above Petrine passages, are consistent with Noah' s preaching to conscious ungodly adults - but not consistent with the notion of preaching also to ' non-conscious' and ' non-ungodly' infants. Thus, explains Calvin, according to Peter "the ancient prophecies were dictated by Christ.... This passage [viz. First Peter 1:10-12] has been perverted strangely by fanatics - so as to exclude the **fathers** who lived under the Law from the hope of salvation....

"[However,] Christ preached by the power of His Spirit" in and through Noah. First Peter 3:19f. "Those who say that the redemption obtained by Christ availed the dead who in the time of Noah were unbelieving, but who repented a short time before they were drowned by the deluge -- have a more likely point....

"It is a remarkable consolation to the godly that death itself brings no loss to their salvation.... They do not cease to live with God, and in the spirit - because Christ quickens them by His Spirit." Compare: First Peter 4:6.

"He [Peter] calls Noah ' a preacher of righteousness' He [Noah] tried to bring a degenerate world to a sound state of mind." Thus notes Calvin, on Second Peter 2:5 - in words obviously referring not to natural and indeed-latent infant imperfections, but to degenerate and clearly-overt adult misbehaviour.

Calvin on original sin from Noah's flood till Sodom's destruction

Even after the flood, God tells us that ' the imagination of man' s heart is evil from his youth' - alias from conception onward. Genesis 8:21. Here Calvin comments²⁹² "that men are born evil.... Yet at the same time we must remember that no blame is to be cast upon God for that which has its origin in the defection of the first man, whereby the order of the creation was subverted."

Moving on to the sexual wickedness of the people in Sodom, Scripture notes Abraham' s two important questions to Jehovah. First: "Do You also wish to destroy the righteous, together with the wicked?" Second: "Shall not the Judge of all the Earth, do right?" Genesis 18:23f.

Indeed, it was the grievous sin and wickedness of specifically the **sodomizing adults** of Sodom - which had given God the desire of wanting to obliterate even their whole city. Hence Abraham asks God: ' Do You also wish to destroy the righteous together with the wicked?' "

Under "the righteous," Abraham here seems to include also if not specifically the justified infants in Sodom. By "the wicked" Abraham here seems to mean the unjust adult Sodomites, alias the practising sodomists.

Here, Calvin comments:²⁹³ "When God chastises the body of a people, He often involves the good and the reprobate in the same punishment.... God had denounced the final destruction of Sodom.... **He would have spared Sodom on account of ten righteous persons....** God does not here lay Himself under any necessity.... He speaks thus, in order to make it better known that He does not on light grounds proceed to the destruction of a city of which no portion remained unpolluted."

By the term "ten righteous persons" above, Calvin obviously means ' ten righteous adult male persons' not guilty of sodomy. Now this very clearly precludes immature infants. For the latter are themselves certainly quite incapable of committing sodomy, altogether regardless of the fact as to whether they themselves had been (or would yet be) made righteous by God - or not.

It is as if God told Abraham: if not even **ten** godly men (*cf.* **tithers** or givers of tenth parts of income) can be found in Sodom - I will **decim**-ate it! Indeed, it is precisely this important **decimal** concept of ' ten righteous mature male persons' - which formed the basis of the Israelitic custom that such a minimum number was necessary to form a *quorum* or *minyan* at any meeting of the *qaahal* alias the religious congregation. See: Genesis 14:13-20; 19:20-32; 28:22; 35:1-15; Exodus 12:3-37 & 18:21f; Leviticus 27:3-31; Ruth 4:2.

Continues Genesis 19:24f - ' Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.'

Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin here comments: "This rain of fire and brimstone was produced by no natural causes.... Sodom was not destroyed without a manifest miracle.... It is often

asked from this passage, '**What had infants done to deserve to be swallowed up in the same destruction with their parents?**'

"The solution of the question is easy.... The human race is in the hand of God, so that **He may devote whom He will to destruction, and may follow whom He will with His mercy**.... The whole of that seed was accursed and execrable, so that God could not justly have spared even the least" -- from that **temporal** judgment.

Indeed, in his *Treatise on the Eternal Predestination of God* (against the Neo-Pelagian heretic Pighius), Calvin insists that "original sin and guilt are...sufficient to condemn men eternally.... Infant children...are taken out of this life before they [*viz.* in themselves] could possibly have performed any of the ' works of charity' [or alternatively any of the ' works of iniquity']....

"There was the same natural [!] condition of birth and of death both in **those infants who died in Sodom and in those who died in Jerusalem -- and their works, or rather [their] non-works, were precisely the same.... [The Lord] God ordained that one part of these children should be born at Jerusalem...while the others should be born in that wide entrance of hell - Sodom!" Compare Ephesians 2:1-3.**

Observe, however, that Calvin does not here claim that any who die in infancy are unregenerate and lost. See *Calvin's Calvinism*, Reformed Free Publishing Association, Grand Rapids, undated reprint, p. 115.

Indeed, the infants in Sodom were certainly not themselves practising homosexuals - but only surrounded by such adults. Though not themselves sinless in the eyes of the Lord, those infants were certainly innocent of the sin of sodomy - for which God destroyed the city as such.

In fact, when God killed even those infants together with their wicked adolescent and adult relatives at the destruction of Sodom - He mercifully removed the infants from those surrounding sodomitic influences for ever.²⁹⁴ Thus they would never become sodomites.

Calvin's adult-erous Sodomites (but not their infants) punished for ever

It is clear that even the babies in Sodom were incinerated. However, lest this seem harsh - let it be remembered that nothing is here said about the **everlasting post-mortal** destination of the **infants** of these Sodomites. There is no evidence that God sent **to hell for ever** those who were themselves not yet old enough to understand and still less to commit either heterosexual fornication or homosexual sodomy.

Yet it certainly seems God sent the unrepentant adult fornicators and practising sodomites to hell for ever. For Second Peter 2:6 says God turned ' the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes..., making them an **example** to those who thereafter should **live in an ungodly way**.' Indeed, Jude 7 relates that the practising fornicators and homosexuals of ' Sodom and Gomorrah..., **giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh** are set forth as an **example**, suffering the **vengeance of eternal fire**.'

On the ' cities of Sodom and Gomorrah' Calvin comments elsewhere:²⁹⁵ "Whenever Scripture speaks of the universal destruction of the ungodly, it refers to this as the type. So Peter says that these cities were designed to be an example....

"The Lord [God] has willed that His wrath against the ungodly should be made known to all generations.... This is what Jude has expressed in speaking of the punishment of eternal fire."

John Calvin further comments:²⁹⁶ "Jude also mentions...that the fire through which the five cities perished, was a type of the eternal fire.... Whenever the prophets wished to designate some memorable and dreadful judgment of God, they painted it under the figure of sulphurous fire and alluded to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. It is not therefore without reason that Jude strikes...with terror by exhibiting the same view....

"The Sodomites, not content with the common manner of committing [many varieties of] fornication, polluted themselves in a way the most filthy and detestable. We ought to observe that He devotes them to eternal fire. For we hence learn that the dreadful spectacle which Moses describes [in Genesis 19], was only an image of a much heavier punishment."

Throughout, however, Calvin is here discussing the eternal fiery destination of practising fornicators and adult homosexuals in Sodom. He is not discussing the non-existent sexual activity (nor the punishment thereof) never practised by their early-dying tiny infants!

Calvin on original sin - from Sodom s incineration till Esau s destruction

Very significantly, Christ Himself speaks of a **lesser** judgment upon Sodom - than upon the impenitent Israelites who heard Him teach during the days of His incarnation. Matthew 10:15 and Mark 6:11 and Luke 10:12.

Matthew 11:23-25 is of particular interest. There, our Lord Jesus Himself indicates that God will deal with the Christ-rejecting Capernaum in His own Galilee on Judgment Day - **more severely** than the ignorant Sodom (**and particularly its innocent babies**).

Says the Saviour: "' You, Capernaum, who have been exalted unto Heaven - shall be brought down to hell. For if the mighty works which have been done in you, had been done in Sodom - it would have remained, until today. But I say to you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment - than for you!'

Immediately after that, Jesus went on to make a most significant statement. He said: "I thank You, O Father - Lord of Heaven and Earth - because You have hidden these things from the "wise" and the "prudent" [*sic*]; but have **revealed** them unto **babies**."

Calvin gives a similar testimony:²⁹⁷ "Christ declares that those who reject the Gospel, will receive **more** severe punishment than the inhabitants of **Sodom**.... It must be understood as referring to the general **judgment**." The genius of Geneva further explains: "Christ mentioned **Sodom** rather than other cities, not only because it went beyond them all in flagitious crimes - but because God destroyed it in an extraordinary manner.... We need not

wonder if Christ declares that they [the inhabitants of Sodom] will be treated **less severely** than those who refuse to hear the Gospel....

"How awful must be the punishment that awaits those who reject Christ, when He speaks openly! Again, if God punishes so severely the despisers of the Word - what shall become of furious enemies who, by blasphemies and a venomous tongue, oppose the Gospel or cruelly persecute it by fire and sword?" Clearly, the **infants** of Sodom could do none of these things.

Indeed, it seems to be precisely the **infants** (as distinct from the adults) of Sodom that Calvin had in mind - during the course of his work on *God's Everlasting Predestination*. There,²⁹⁸ Calvin wrote that "**the conditions of birth and death were alike to infants who died in Sodom and in Jerusalem, and there was no difference in their works....**"

"Who will not adore the wonderful judgment of God, whereby it comes to pass that some are born at Jerusalem, whence soon [but not immediately] they pass to a better life - while [hellish] Sodom, the entrance to the lower region, receives others at their birth? Moreover, I by no means deny that Christ awards the need of righteousness - to the elect. So **the reprobate will then suffer - for their impiety and their crimes.**"

Observe that Calvin does not here teach -- as some wrongly allege he here teaches - that all of the babies dying in Sodom went straight to hell. John Calvin here teaches that not all but "some [who] are born at **Jerusalem**" would "soon [but not immediately]...pass to a better life," even while not hell itself but "**Sodom, the entrance** to the lower region, receives **others**" - apparently even from Jerusalem.

The latter ["others"], of course, was true of reprobate Israelites like the adult Esau. Though a covenant child, he was 'received' by 'Sodom' both before and at his birth - even though it was only later that he went to hell forever, after his predestinated **adult** death.

Calvin here makes a very searching remark. He says that "the reprobate will then suffer for **their** impiety and **their** crimes." This well suits the adult Israelite Esau.

Yet it no way suits the same Esau before and at his birth. Indeed, Esau had been predestinated to die not as an 'innocent'*σιϛ* infant - but only after becoming a lascivious adult (Genesis 24:3 & 26:34f & 27:46 & 28:8).

Still less does it suit the early-dying **babies** of Sodom (before and at and soon after their births). For what "impiety" had they **then** personally perpetrated? What "crimes" had **they** themselves at that time committed? None!

Calvin, like Job, never said God sends pagan babies to hell forever

We have already seen - compare from note 45 above onward - that Job seems to have believed those dying as prenatal fetuses or at birth go straight into a conscious state of pleasant rest. We have also seen that Calvin himself seems to have agreed that this is indeed what the canonical book of Job teaches. Compare from note 49 above onward.

Thus the Pre-Mosaic book of Job - and John Calvin' s comment thereon. The same is true also of the Mosaic book of Exodus - and Calvin' s comment thereon too.

Indeed, in Exodus 11:4f Moses says that God would kill the firstborn in the land of Egypt but spare the children of Israel - ' so that you may know that the Lord puts a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.' Yet nothing is here said about the Lord **kill**ing babies - and still less about sending **babies** to **hell**. To the contrary, the passage is discussing the **physical** slaughter of ' the first born' in Egypt - nearly all of which ' first born' (unlike the ' last born') would no longer have been babies.

Calvin comments to the same effect:²⁹⁹ "It appears how courageously Moses sustained the menaces of the tyrant [Pharaoh].... He willingly encounters him, and boasts that He [God] shall be his conqueror...[viz.] by the death of [not his last-born but] his **first**-born son....

"God again puts a difference between the Egyptians - and His Own people.... The latter shall be quiet and tranquil.... [So] God divides them very widely one from the other!" Yet hell is never mentioned here.

Even more interestingly, in Deuteronomy 20:13f, the inspired Moses himself told the people of Israel: ' When you come near to a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace to it.... But if it wants to make no peace with you, but wishes to make war against you -- then you shall besiege it....

' Wherthe Lord your God has delivered it into your hands, you shall smite every [mature] male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women and the little ones and the cattle and all that is in the city...you shall take for yourself....

"That is what you shall do to all the cities very far off from you.... But of the cities of these [nearby] people which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes. But you shall utterly destroy them: [namely] the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites!"

Only nearby pagan peoples, who could have polluted the Israelites, were to be exterminated. Yet God in the same breath ordered His ancient people to do everything possible to spare the totality of the inhabitants of all vanquished pagan cities that were far-off (and thus of little moral threat to the Israelites). Even if such cities would not surrender - only the mature males but never their womenfolk and children were to be smitten.

In all of this, God' s people were required to image the merciful God Himself. Therefore, it would seem that God had a much harsher attitude toward mature male pagans - than toward their womenfolk and especially toward their ignorant children. Accordingly, Calvin himself here comments anent those ' far-off' pagan cities³⁰⁰:

"It was not lawful to kill any [of the enemies of the Hebrews], except those who were taken in arms and sword in hand.... This permission, therefore, to slaughter - which is extended to [slaughter] ' all the males' - is far distant from...its execution [regardless of sex and age]....

"Inhumanity is here mitigated, since they might not kill either women or children" among their far-off pagan opponents. For "when a city will not receive peace, God gives His people leave to destroy all the men - reserving only the young children, the women, and the cattle."

Accordingly, Calvin taught that the children of the far-off pagan cities were not to be slaughtered. Only those 'nearby' were not to be saved alive physically. Indeed, even then - and *a fortiori* - nothing at all is said about the **everlasting destiny** of the unspared children of even those nearby pagan cities with their truly abominable practices.

Calvin on the spared children of the Ninevites in the Book of Jonah

An extended quotation from Calvin's comment on statements in the Book of Jonah, will establish that particularly **the infants** of pagan Nineveh were spared from at least a temporal destruction. Here again, there is no question of 'impenitent' [?!] babies - or, for that matter, even of their parents (the penitent adult Ninevites) - going to hell for ever.

Quite the contrary. See Matthew 12:41. There, Jesus Himself has declared that the Ninevites shall rise in judgment against the wicked Hebrew generation of His own day. They shall condemn it - "because they [the Ninevites] repented at the preaching of Jonah."

Calvin explains³⁰¹ that "Nineveh must have been a great city.... This city was large, and so populous that there were there one hundred twenty thousand children. If any one receives not this testimony - let him feed on the lies of the devil! But since there were **so many children** there - what else can we say but that the circumference of the city was very great?"

Furthermore, "destruction had been denounced not only on men, but also **on the whole city** - even on the buildings.... Jonah afterwards adds, 'And they cried [out] mightily to God.' This must be confined to human beings. For it could not have been applied to brute animals.... 'And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way' [Thus] the Ninevites obtained pardon -- through their repentance."

Calvin: wicked Nineveh's babies did not merit destruction

Now it was not an impenitent city which God here spared. Here, He spared a city which repented - at least as regards its adolescents and adults.

Yet the would-be spectator Jonah still became very angry that God had spared Nineveh. So God shrivelled up a leafy gourd which had been sheltering Jonah from the hot sun. This, however, made that malcontent even more angry. Jonah 4:1-9f.

Says Calvin:³⁰² "It was no wonder that God the Creator and Father had a care for so many thousands of human beings.... The men of Nineveh were [or had been] alienated from God.

"Yet, as they were human beings, God as...the Father of the whole human race acknowledged them as His Own - at least to such an extent as to give them the common light of day and

other blessings of earthly life. We now, then, understand the import of this comparison: 'Thou [O Jonah] wouldest spare...the gourd; and should I not spare this great city?!' "

Calvin now paraphrases God' s question: "' Should not I Who am God, in Whose hand are all things, Whose prerogative and Whose constant practice it is **mercifully** to bear with men - should not I spare them, though they were worthy of destruction? ... Should not I spare a great city?'

Explains Calvin: "The matter here is not concerning a little plant - but a large number of people. And, in the last place, it is a city ' in which there are [also] a hundred and twenty thousand [infant] human beings who known not how to distinguish between their right hand and the left'

"What He adds -- [the fact] that they could not distinguish between the right hand and the left - is to be referred, I have no doubt, **to their age**.... This opinion has been almost universally received.... That city, we know, was not only like some great cities many of which are at this day in Europe. But it surpassed most of the principal cities at this day....

"God," concludes Calvin, "intended to show that though there was the justest reason for destroying entirely the whole city - there were yet other reasons which justified the suspension of so dreadful a vengeance. For **many infants** were there - **who had not**, by their own transgressions, **deserved such a destruction!**"

It is true that Calvin is here speaking about the temporal destruction of Nineveh and all its inhabitants - and not at all specifically about their everlasting punishment. Yet, *a fortiori*, this certainly still has implications even regarding hell - of which that temporal destruction would have been but a faint preview.

Calvin on the safeness of trustful sucklings and babies at Isaiah 11:8f

The Prophet Isaiah (at 11:8f) seems to have been predicting that when the New Testament triumphs, ' the unweaned baby shall play at the hole of the serpent, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the den of the cockatrice. They shall not hurt nor destroy.... For the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'

Here, Calvin comments³⁰³ "that when men [alias human beings] have been brought into a state of favour with God, and have been cleansed from their depravity by the Spirit of regeneration, they will likewise be free from every hurtful disposition.... Since animals are permitted [at the moment] to do injury even to **children**, this shows that the whole race of Adam has been stained with pollution from the very womb."

Yet, continues Calvin, "those men whom a concealed poison led to deeds of violence, will have their disposition changed and will do no harm even to **little children**.... ' For the Earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord...as with waters that cover the sea' If this fullness of knowledge take possession of our minds, it will free us from all malice!"

Here, the whole context not only seems to have predicted a vast future change even in the behaviour of now-hurtful animals also toward children. Indeed, Isaiah here also seems to have implied the need even for a present and a personal **faith** and a **childlike** trust in Divine Providence - on the part of both unweaned sucklings and weaned pre-toddlers.

Hence, Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin' s mention here of "the Spirit of **regeneration**" in juxtaposition "to **children**" and even "to **little children**" - is striking indeed.

Calvin on the children of the wicked in the Book of Isaiah

In Isaiah 14:21, the prophet makes a grim prediction against the cruel kingdom of Babylon. Instructs Isaiah: ' Prepare slaughter for its children - for the iniquity of their fathers!'

Now it should carefully be noted here that, in punishing the wicked adult fathers of the kingdom of Babylon - this verse speaks of the grim slaughter **not of its babies**, but only of its ' children(age not specified). Moreover, the context presupposes that those ' children' of Babylon would themselves already be either adolescents or adults - and themselves also be very conscious and active sinners.

On this matter, John Calvin gives an extended comment - all of which is relevant to our subject. "Here," he explains,³⁰⁴ "Isaiah prophesies more plainly than before - against the King of Babylon.... We must see to whom this discourse relates.

"It must be understood that reference is made, though not directly expressed, to some servants as **officers or executioners**.... Who were they? Partly the Medes and Persians, and partly others by whom Babylon was completely overthrown....

"When he says that...' the iniquity of the fathers' is punished, it may at first sight appear to be excessively harsh to include children along with the **fathers** in what relates to the infliction of punishment on them -- and still more harsh that the punishment due to the **fathers** should be extended even to their children and grandchildren.

"This inconsistency may easily be avoided, if the word '*aavoon*' be translated: **misery**. For it denotes the punishment of sin, as well as sin itself. Exodus 20:5 and 34:7; Deuteronomy 5:9; Jeremiah 32:18....

"Nor is this inconsistent with what is said by Ezekiel [18:20], ' The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father' **God does not punish any innocent person**....

"This passage [Isaiah 14:21] ought not to be understood as if the punishment due to ancestors were transferred by God to children who in other respects deserved no such punishment. For the guilt of the children is connected with the guilt of the fathers....

"When the Lord casts away that man [the King of Babylon] and his posterity, we certainly have no right to remonstrate with Him.... If, therefore, He cast off anyone - must not that man' seed also be accursed? When we are destitute of His grace, what remains but iniquity?

And if they are liable to eternal death - much more to temporal punishments.... God never punishes those who do not deserve it, and **He is by nature inclined to compassion.**" Thus Calvin on Isaiah 14:21.

Calvin: the children at Isaiah 14:21 not babies but adolescents or adults

Calvin' s comment continues: "All who are destitute of the grace of God, are involved in the sentence of eternal death. Hence it follows that the children of the reprobate whom the curse of God pursues, are liable to the same sentence."

Note, however, that Calvin does not here say that God curses **infants**. Still less does he say that God curses infants **as** infants to suffer **while** yet infants.

Calvin here indeed says that God curses "the children of the reprobate" unto an "eternal death." Yet Calvin does not here specify the **age** of those children.

Isaiah himself indeed seems to have been considering those "children" as themselves already having attained adolescence or adulthood. Hence, Calvin does **not** claim that God here curses **infants**. Still less does John Calvin here claim that God sentenced them to die as infants; and, **as such**, to go to hell.

To the contrary, as John Calvin explains: "**Isaiah, therefore, does not speak of innocent children [alias babies and toddlers], but of flagitious and unprincipled children who perhaps even exceeded their parents in wickedness.** In consequent of which they were justly associated with their parents, and subjected to the same punishment, seeing that **they [themselves] have followed the same manner of life.**

"It will be said that in that case, **they suffer the punishment of their own sin and not of their parents.** This, I acknowledge, is partly true.... It was with their parents that the rejection began, on account of which they also have been forsaken and rejected by God. Their own guilt is not set aside as if they had been innocent."

Thus, although these children undoubtedly suffered to some extent on account of the indiscretions of their parents and the penalty which the latter properly incurred - in large part, the children were not punished for the crimes of their parents. Indeed, at least in part, those children of their parents suffered for "their own sin." Those children suffered for their sin which they committed when **adults** - their sin in which they "even **exceeded** their parents in wickedness."

Calvin on the children of the wicked in the Book of Jeremiah

In Jeremiah 19:3-4, that prophet predicted that the Lord would bring destruction upon Judah. The reason for this was because her people had committed idolatry in ' the valley of the son of Hinnom' - and ' filled the place with the blood of innocents.'

According to Calvin, ' the blood of innocents' which Jeremiah here says was shed by apostate covenanters - means that of their own children. It is true that the passage is not discussing the everlasting destiny of those children. However, inasmuch as it clearly calls them "**innocent**" - it certainly suggests that their postmortal destiny would be appropriate to that innocence.

In a copious and rather extended discussion of this passage, Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin makes it clear that these ' innocents' were the infants of those who were themselves apostates. He comments³⁰⁵ of the apostate adult Israelites that "they were accustomed to sacrifice and offer their children - by casting them into the fire.

"Many indeed performed this in a different way, by purifying their children and carrying them round the fire - so that they only felt the flame, and escaped unhurt. But there were those who...killed their children and then burnt them....

"Many killed their children.... Some only purified them. How[so]ever this may have been, God justly abominated the sacrifice.... How detestable that service was to God appears clear from this, that the prophets give the name of ' hell' to the valley of Hinnom *geey* *Hinnoom* [or *Géena* alias Gehenna].... We know that at the time of Christ, it was the common name for hell....

"That place was ' filled with the blood of innocents.' For there they killed their children.... By this circumstance, Jeremiah again amplified the wickedness of the people. For they had not only despised God and His Law, but also cruelly destroyed their innocent infants.... He proved them guilty not only of impiety and profaneness in vitiating the worship of God, but also of brutal and barbarous savageness in not sparing **innocent** blood!"

In here referring to the "**innocent**" blood shed by **apostate** covenant parents, at least implicitly Calvin has raised the question as to the everlasting destination of the (apparently equally-innocent) infants even of Pagans **less depraved** than the apostate covenant-breaking adult Israelites. By ' less depraved' we here mean Pagan parents who **do not** sacrifice or slaughter their own infants to their idols in the way in which the above-mentioned apostate Israelites **did** to whatsoever Deity or imagined idol they then had in mind when perpetrating such outrageous acts.

Here, we should also compare Luke 12:47f - teaching a greater punishment for more-knowledgeable apostates than for less-knowledgeable persons. The fact is, all such are - although in different degrees - covenant-breakers.

For in the last analysis, even Pagans are but the great-grandchildren and the further descendants of apostate covenanters. See: Genesis 3:15 to 4:16f; 9:24 to 10:5f; Exodus 20:5f; Hosea 6:7-10f.

God' s promise, however, is that even after severe acts of ungodliness on the part of those who claim to be His people, His covenant shall not depart from their seed nor from their seed' s seed - **for ever**. Isaiah 59:20f cf. Romans 11:26.

Calvin on the covenant children of the wicked in Ezekiel

Now precisely Calvin has an interesting comment on the man clothed with linen who **marked** persons on their **foreheads** in Ezekiel' s Jerusalem at the beginning of the exile. Apparently comparing this to baptism (and indeed also to infant baptism) - cf. Revelation 7:3-8 & 22:2-4 - Calvin explains³⁰⁶ of Christians that also "we daily bear a sign by which God distinguishes us from the reprobate."

Calvin continues: "When God struck the land of Egypt, the Israelites were passed over by the angel - since the blood of a lamb was **sprinkled** on the doorposts. Exodus 12:22f. Every house which had the mark of blood, was secure and safe.... But God wishes the **Chaldeans** so to attack the whole city, that **they** respect neither **age** nor sex."

On the other hand, Calvin goes on, "God neither spared all the elect nor made a difference in consequence of the mark - because the wicked obtained safety, as well as the faithful.... Daily experience teaches us...that the very best are so afflicted - that God' s judgment begins with them." Yet clearly, this is not referring to the judgment of everlasting damnation.

Through Ezekiel (16:20f), God again indicts the apostate Israelites for sacrificing even their own infants to idols. ' You have taken your sons and your daughters, whom you have borne to Me - and these you have sacrificed to them to be devoured.... You have slain My children!'

Calvin comments³⁰⁷ on this passage: "Here God places Himself in the position of a parent - because He had adopted **the people**.... All their offspring were His sons, since [at least until later disproved]...all who spring from the people ought to be esteemed His children.... They were holy....

"The same thing ought at this [present] time to prevail.... [Thus] God acknowledges supernaturally as His sons all who spring from the faithful - not only in the first or second degree but even to a thousand generations."

Calvin then clearly states:³⁰⁸ "The same thing ought at this time to prevail in the Papacy. For we are all born under the curse. And yet God acknowledges supernaturally as His sons all who spring from the faithful - not only in the first or second degree but even to a thousand generations."

Continues Calvin: "Paul says that **the children of the faithful are holy**, since...the adoption of God remains fixed. First Corinthians 7:14.

"In the Papacy, such declension has grown up through many ages, that they have altogether denied God.... And yet, it is certain that a portion of God' s covenant remains among them."

Calvin is here implying that an **early-dying baby** also of **Romish** and **even of apostate** and **impious parents** and **grandparents**, is himself or herself nevertheless a **tiny child of God** (also even before and indeed irrespective of his or her infant baptism or not). For, after Calvin had consulted with all of his colleagues in and around Geneva - who unanimously concurred with him in this - Calvin stated in his own November 1559 *Letter to Knox*:³⁰⁹

"God' s promise comprehends not only the offspring of every believer in the first line of descent - but extends to thousands of generations.... Whence it has happened that the interruption of piety which has prevailed in Popery, has not taken away from baptism its force and efficacy.... To us, then, it is by no means doubtful that offspring descended from holy and pious ancestors belong to the body of the Church - though their fathers and grandfathers may have been apostates....

"Wherever the profession of Christianity has not been interrupted or destroyed altogether, children are defrauded of their privileges if they are excluded from the common symbol.... It is unjust, when God three hundred years ago or more has thought them worthy of His adoption - that the subsequent impiety of some of their progenitors should interrupt the course of heavenly grace.... We see no reason for rejecting any child for whom a due pledge has been given."

Very relevantly, the prophet Ezekiel (18:1-4) also declares: "The Word of the Lord came to me again, saying, ' What do you mean that you use this adage concerning the land of Israel, saying "It is the fathers who have eaten sour grapes, yet it is the children' s teeth that are set on edge?" As I live,' says the Lord God, ' you shall no more have occasion to use this proverb in Israel! Behold, all souls are Mine. As the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine. The soul that keeps on sinning - it shall die!' "

Here Rev. Professor Dr. Calvin comments:³¹⁰ "Those who perish, are not without fault.... No one at this day perishes [or dies] who does not partly bear the fault of another - namely, of Adam by whose fall and revolt the whole human race actually perished [or died]....

"As far as [this] relates to young children, they seem to perish [or to die] not by their own but for another' s fault.... But as far as concerns [Ezekiel] the prophet' s expression - the dispute concerning infants is vain and out of place.... In this place, we are **not** treating of the tender young when **newly born** - but of **adults!**"

Calvin on infant redemption in the Minor Prophets

In Zechariah 13:7, God predicts of Messiah the Shepherd: ' Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd.... The sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn My hand upon the little ones.'

Here, Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin comments:³¹¹ "This, as I have already observed, was fulfilled in Christ.... Crucifixion and violent death are fitly designated by the word ' sword.' It follows, at the end of the verse, ' And I will turn My hand to the little ones.'

"Some consider that '**the little ones**' would be exposed to many evils, because [they say] the Lord would ever hold His rod in His hand - to chastise them! But the Prophet [Zechariah], I have no doubt, meant what is far different - that **God would show mercy to them!**"

In Malachi 2:14f, about ' the wife of your covenant,' God says that He hated divorce. He also says He made but one wife for man ideally, ' so that He might seek a godly seed.'

However, nothing is said here about ungodly seed. Still less is there any discussion here - of everlasting punishment for any dying as infants.

God, comments Calvin,³¹² "sought then the ' seed of God.' That is, He instituted marriage, [so] that legitimate and pure offspring might be brought forth.

"Hence then the Prophet indirectly shows that all are spurious who proceed from polygamy.... Nor ought any to be so counted but those who are born according to God' s institution."

A moment' s thought will show that this text cannot be used to support the proposition that the early-dying infants of polygamists are lost. For Isaac, the heir of the spiritual promise, was the son of the polygamist Abraham. Genesis 16:3 to 25:1.

Indeed, all twelve of the archpatriarchs of Israel, were themselves the children of the polygamous Jacob. Yet it is precisely their names that are written on the foundations even of the heavenly Jerusalem! Genesis 29:16 to 35:26 cf. Matthew 19:28 and Revelation 7:4-8 & 21:12-14.

Calvin on being born again even when first coming into the World

In the New Testament, the Apostle John in the very prologue of his Gospel seems to be saying that Christ enlightens every human being coming forth into the World [at the time of his own birth] - and that at least some of such have **already** been (re)generated. John 1:9-13. On that passage, Calvin comments:

"The Evangelist emphasizes this, so that we may learn that Christ is the Light - from the effect which each of us feels in himself.... Christ makes us all partakers of His brightness.... Beams from this light are shed upon the whole race of men....

"There is no man to whom some awareness of eternal light does not penetrate.... No man will penetrate into the Kingdom of God by the cleverness and perspicuity of his own mind. The Spirit of God alone opens the gate of Heaven to His elect....

"Implanted into Christ by faith, we attain the right of adoption as the sons of God.... They are already born of God, who believe....

"By faith, we conceive the incorruptible seed by which we are born again to new and divine life.... Faith is a part of our regeneration, an entering into the Kingdom of God so that He may number us among His children.

"The enlightening of our minds by the Holy Spirit, belongs to our renewal. So faith flows from its source, regeneration. But since by this same faith we receive Christ Who sanctifies us by His Spirit, it is called the beginning of our adoption....

"When the Lord breathes faith into us, He regenerates us in a hidden and secret way that is unknown to us. But when faith has been given, we grasp with a lively awareness not only the

grace of adoption but also newness of life and the other gifts of the Holy Spirit.... We begin to be sons of God only after we believe."

Nevertheless, John the baptizer (just like Christ after him) called even the Hebrew Pharisees a ' generation of vipers' - alias the seed of the serpent. Matthew 3:7. 23:33.

Indeed, the Lord Jesus Himself told one of them that unless a person be regenerated of water and Spirit - he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. John 3:5.

Here, Calvin comments³¹³ that opinions applying the above verse to the theory of baptismal regeneration "seem to me alien to Christ' s meaning.... It is true, indeed, that we are excluded from salvation if we **neglect** baptism; and in this sense I confess it is necessary. But it is absurd to confine assurance of salvation to the sign!

"So far as this passage is concerned, I cannot at all bring myself to believe that Christ is speaking of baptism.... It is as if Christ had said that no one is a son of God until he has been renewed by water, and that this water is the Spirit.... By water, therefore, is meant simply the inward cleansing and quickening of the Holy Spirit."

Significantly, the Reformed Church Historian Schaff here notes³¹⁴ that "we are made children of God by faith - and not by baptism, which only recognizes the fact. Calvin makes sure [or makes certain] the salvation of all **elect** children - whether baptized or not.... In order to extend election beyond the limits of the visible means of grace, he departed from the...scholastic interpretation of John 3:5....

"He [Calvin] thinks that a reference [here] to Christian baptism before it was instituted [later by Jesus,] would have been untimely and unintelligible to Nicodemus. He therefore connects water and Spirit into one idea of purification and regeneration by the Spirit."

Calvin on the lifted-up Christ saving whosoever trusts Him in John 3:14-16

In John 3:14-16, we are told that ' the Son of man must be lifted up - so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the World that He gave His only begotten Son - so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Too, in John 12:32, Jesus further added: "When I be lifted up from the Earth, I will draw all men unto Me."

Here, comments John Calvin,³¹⁵ "Christ shows the first cause...of our salvation.... Faith in Christ quickens all....

"The heavenly Father does not wish the human race that He loves, to perish.... Christ' s words mean nothing different, when He says the cause lies in the love of God.... He adds that the Son was given to men, [so] that they should not perish....

"The outstanding thing about faith," explains Calvin, "is that it delivers us from eternal destruction.... He [God] is favourable to the whole World, when He calls all without

exception to the faith of Christ.... Christ is open to all and displayed to all, but God opens the eyes only of the elect - so that they may seek Him, by faith....

"When Christ is uplifted - on the cross - He will gather all men to Himself to raise them from Earth to Heaven.... He will exalt all men with Himself, to His Father.... I agree with Chrysostom, who says that Christ used the universal word [' all'], because the Church was to be gathered from Gentiles and Jews alike.... The *Vulgate* [of Jerome] has ' I will draw all things to Me' ; and Augustine maintains that it should be read so.³¹⁶

Calvin on Christ's saving the World in John 3:17-21

The next two verses in particular, John 3:17-18, strongly suggest the universal salvation of all dying in infancy -- after by God's grace coming to an ' infant faith' in Christ. Here, the Lord Jesus declares: "God sent His Son...not to condemn the World, but **so that the World might be saved** through Him. He who **believes** in Him, is not condemned" etc.

Here, Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin comments³¹⁷ that "God's sending His Son to us, was not fruitless.... The proper function of the Son of God is that whosoever believes, may obtain salvation through Him. None need now wonder or worry how he can escape death, since we believe it was God's purpose that Christ should rescue us from it. The word ' World' comes again - so that no one at all may think he is excluded, if only he keeps to the road of faith....

"The next sentence - ' he that believeth not, hath been condemned already' - means that there is no other remedy.... All unbelievers are completely ruined. **But it should be observed that Christ is speaking especially of those whose ungodliness will be shown in open contempt of the Gospel....** [Jesus] Christ here...directs His discourse against those who **deliberately and maliciously** extinguish the light kindled by God." In fact - it is difficult to see how this could be applied to any infant.

In John 3:19-21, the Bible says ' that men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.... But he who does truth, comes to the light - so that his deeds may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God.'

When pondering on these verses, Calvin could hardly have been thinking of infants. Instead, he must almost certainly have had adults alone in mind. For here he comments³¹⁸ that, "lest anyone should ascribe his condemnation to Christ, He tells us that every man should put the blame on himself.... Christ's purpose is to restrain the wickedness of men.... He punishes unbelief with eternal death."

Calvin says infants are exempt from the abiding wrath of God in John 3:36

In John 3:35-36, John the baptizer says of Christ: ' The Father keeps on loving the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who keeps on trusting in the Son, has everlasting life. But he who keeps on not trusting the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God keeps on abiding upon him!'

Calvin comments³¹⁹ that John is here "not speaking of the common love which God has to all men whom He has created; or to His other works - but of that **unique** love which begins at the Son and flows from Him." It is the Father' s special love of His Son and, through Him, of all of His elect. "For this love wherewith, loving the Son, He embraces us also in Him - is the cause of His communicating all His benefits to us by Christ' s hand....

"He adjudges to eternal death all who do not believe in Christ.... It is Christ' s office to save the lost. Those who reject the salvation offered in Him, deservedly remain in death. We have just said [at John 3:18f] that this belongs peculiarly to those who reject the Gospel which has been made known to them.... No hope remains for us, unless we are delivered by Christ.

"He [John] says that ' the wrath of God abideth' on unbelievers. Yet I am not dissatisfied with Augustine' s idea that the word ' abideth' is used to teach us that ~~were~~ appointed to death from the womb, in that we are all born [or even conceived as] the children of wrath.

"At any rate, I willingly admit a suggestion of this sort - **so long as** we hold the genuine and simple meaning to be what I **have said** - [viz.] that death burdens all **unbelievers**.... Indeed, although the reprobate are already naturally condemned, they [**themselves**] **bring on themselves a new death by their [own] unbelief.**"

Calvin here gives qualified approval to "Augustine' s idea" anent the transmission of original sin at conception. Yet Calvin does not here approve of Augustine' s other idea of consigning all of the early-dying unbaptized babies of either believers or unbelievers straight to hell. For Calvin elsewhere declares: "I think Augustine mistaken, when...he cuts off the hope of life from **infants** whom the Lord declares to be His Own - and to whom baptism would not be competent, if they [viz. the infants] were not **already** called to the fellowship of the Church."³²⁰

In his famous *Institutes of the Christian Religion*,³²¹ Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin gives a definite statement which **excludes** infants from the wrath of God mentioned in John 3:36. "Servetus, not the least among the Anabaptists" - explains Calvin - had alleged "that all who believe not in the Son remain in death [and that] ' the wrath of God abideth on them,' John 3:36; and [that] therefore infants who are unable to believe, lie under condemnation."

Replies John Calvin: "I answer that Christ does not there [in John 3:36] speak of the general guilt in which all the posterity of Adam are involved, but only threatens the despisers of the Gospel who proudly and contumaciously spurn the grace which is offered to them. **But this has nothing to do with infants.** At the same time, I meet him [the Anabaptist Servetus] with the opposite argument.

"Every one whom Christ blesses, is exempted from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God. Therefore, seeing it is certain that infants are blessed by Him, it follows that they are freed from death....

"How sweet is it to pious minds to be assured not only by word but even by ocular demonstration that they [infants blessed by Him] are so much in favour with their heavenly Father, that He interests Himself in their prosperity! Here, we may see how He acts towards

us as a most provident Parent - not ceasing to care for us even after our death, but consulting and providing for our children.... It is no slight stimulus to us to bring them up in the fear of God and the observance of His Law - when we reflect that from their birth they have been considered and acknowledged by Him as His children."

Calvin on the punishment of ignorant adults with fewer stripes

In Luke 12:47f, apparently referring also to everlasting punishment, Jesus says: "That servant who, having known his Lord' s will - did not prepare himself neither did His will, shall be beaten with many stripes. However, he who not having known, nevertheless did things worthy of stripes - shall be beaten with few. For unto whomsoever much has been given, much shall be required of him."

The above language certainly suits adults - but hardly suits infants. Indeed, while obliquely making some application of this to baptism, Calvin does not argue that unbaptized babies are *ipso facto* lost.

For Calvin comments³²² that "it is vain to resort to the subterfuge that he who has gone wrong through ignorance, is not at fault. For, altogether on the contrary, the Heavenly Judge declares that though such offenders are visited by **lighter** chastisement - yet they will not be unpunished altogether....

"Hence it appears how trifling and worthless is the excuse of those who, now rejecting the plain doctrine of the Gospel, endeavour to screen such obstinacy **by the ignorance of their fathers**. As if ignorance were an adequate shield to ward off the judgment of God....

"Our Lord compares death...to **baptism** (Romans 6:14)... The children of God...shortly afterwards rise again to life - so that death is nothing else than a passage through the midst of the waters" and into Heaven.

Luke 12:47f, explains the genius of Geneva, explicitly teaches that the Lord will punish ignorant adult non-believers - much more leniently than knowledgeable adult apostates from orthodoxy. *A fortiori*, this would imply that God would treat the (even more ignorant) early-dying babies of ignorant non-believers - more favourably than their parents.

God would also seem to treat the ignorant early-dying babies of knowledgeable but apostate parents - far more favourably than the latter themselves. It is even conceivable that God would treat early-dying infants of unbelievers and/or of apostates more favourably than infants of believers not dying early, and almost as well as the early-dying babies of believers.

The latter infants are said to be "holy" (First Corinthians 7:14). It would then follow that the early-dying infants of ignorant non-believers - though previously 'unclean' from the time of their conception onward - subsequently become just as holy as, if not holier than, at least some of the infants of believers. That, however, occurs not by merit nor by inheritance from one' s parents - but solely by virtue of the undeserved grace of God.

Calvin on Christ healing the daughter of the Canaanite woman

In Matthew 15:24f, a Canaanite woman came to Jesus Christ. Very movingly, she asked Him to heal her demon-vexed daughter.

Calvin comments³²³ that "the woman was a native of a heathen nation.... She had not been instructed in the doctrine of the Law....

"She came of her own accord to Christ.... Though this woman was an alien, and did not belong to the Lord' s flock, yet she had acquired some taste of piety and true religion.³²⁴

Very significantly, Calvin then adds:³²⁵ "There may sometimes be a sort of implicit faith - that is, a faith which is not accompanied by a full and distinct knowledge of sound doctrine.... Christ has two ways - [the way] of speaking; and [alternatively, the way] of being silent....

"Though He withheld at that time the words of His mouth, yet He spoke within to the mind of the woman.... So this secret inspiration was a substitute for the outward preaching.

"Besides, her prayer arose out of the ' hearing of faith.' Romans 10:17.... A small seed of doctrine in ' a woman of Canaan' yielded such abundant fruit!"

So Christ acted on the ' faith' of the ' heathen' woman. He then also healed her daughter - and thus blessed her too.

Calvin on Christ seeking and saving infants that were lost

In Matthew 18:1-14, Jesus called a little child to Him and then urged His adult disciples to keep on being converted and to become as little children. Christ then indicated that this child was one of ' these little ones which believe in Me.'

Jesus next urged His adult disciples that they ' not despise one of these little ones.' He then indicated that He, the Son of man, had come to save that which was lost. For ' it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish!'

Throughout, nothing is said as to either the Christian belief or the non-Christian unbelief of that child' s parents. It is clear, however, that this tiny child himself personally believed in Jesus - because he or she had been given that faith generously and directly by the sovereign God -- regardless of the agency of his or her own parents.

Calvin says³²⁶ that Jesus here "held up to them ' a little child' as an emblem of humility.... Paul bids us be ' children' not ' in understanding' but ' in malice' (First Corinthians 14:20)....

"The tender age of little children is distinguished by simplicity.... They are properly and justly held out by Christ as an example.... To the example of ' little children' - must be referred the ' conversion' of which He now speaks....

"God embraces with wonderful love - the ' little ones.' It would be strange indeed that a mortal man should ' despise' or treat as of no account those whom God holds in such high esteem.... We ought therefore to ' beware of despising' their salvation."

John Calvin s repeated denials of any justificatory need for baptism

In Mark 16:16, Jesus says: ' he who believes and is baptized, shall be saved; but he who does not believe, shall be condemned.' Ritualists and Romanists argue this means that all unbaptized persons are lost.

John Calvin, however - commenting on various passages throughout the Bible - repeatedly denies the need for baptism even in respect of infant salvation. This clearly implies the availability of salvation also for unbaptized infants. We give just a few examples, in our next paragraphs below.

Baptism replaces circumcision. Colossians 2:11f. Regarding circumcision in Genesis 17:14, John Calvin comments that "if **any** infants were deprived by death of the tokens of salvation - He [the Lord] **spared** them.... To consign to destruction those infants whom a sudden death has not allowed to be presented for baptism...is a cruelty originating in superstition."

Mark 16:16 teaches that ' he who believes and is baptized, shall be saved.' Calvin comments that although "**baptism** is joined to the **faith**..., we must hold that it [baptism] is not required as absolutely necessary to salvation so that all who have not obtained it must perish."

On Romans 4:10f, Calvin comments that "Abraham possessed righteousness before he had circumcision." Consequently, circumcision itself did not at all create incipient righteousness - but only sealed righteousness already present in Abraham before he was circumcised.

Explains Calvin: "There is now no necessity for circumcision where baptism exists.... Circumcision does not justify -- because Abraham was justified by faith [**before** circumcision].... We deny therefore that men are justified by baptism, since they are justified [**pre-circumcisionally**] by the same faith as that of Abraham."

So then, John Calvin states³²⁷ that "assurance of salvation does not depend on participation in the sacraments - as if justification consisted in it. This, which is treasured up in Christ alone, we know to be communicated not less by the preaching of the Gospel than by the seal of the sacrament....

It may be enjoyed completely without this seal. So true it is, as Augustine declares, that there may be invisible sanctification without a visible sign.... Augustine' *Old Testament Questions*, Book III."

John Calvin continues: "I know it is a common belief that we receive forgiveness...at our first regeneration, by baptism alone. But those who entertain this fiction - err.... We maintain that children, who happen to depart this life before an opportunity of baptizing them in water, are not excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven.... Unless we admit this position, great injury

is done to the covenant of God, as if in itself it were weak.... Its effect [thus] depends not either on baptism, or on any accessories."³²⁸

Calvin on the wrath and mercy of God in Romans chapters one to four

Romans requires careful study. Much of the hamartiological language in that book of the Bible, cannot apply to infants - but only to wayward adults.

Thus, the Apostle Paul indicates that ' the wrath of God keeps on being revealed...against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who keep on suppressing the truth in unrighteousness' - notably by idolatry and homosexuality. Romans 1:18-28f. Such sins are clearly uncommittable by tiny infants.

Again, ' as many as have sinned...shall also perish.... Whenever the [heathen] Gentiles...do by nature the things contained in the Law..., they keep on showing the work of the Law written in their hearts, [by] their conscience also bearing witness.' Romans 2:12-15.

As Calvin comments:³²⁹ "All the Gentiles alike...prove their knowledge that...adultery, theft and murder are evils." Yet what babe-in-arms ever committed (or could commit) **such** evils?

Yet Romans 4:1-13 is of very great importance - also for infants. For there, Paul asks Christians what Abraham our father had found. Paul himself then replies that Abraham was blessed by God, when He gave Abraham faith to trust in God' s own righteousness on Abraham' s behalf - so that the latter could become **the father** of all who believe.

Declares the great Apostle Paul: ' We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but [priorly] in uncircumcision.'

For Abraham had ' received the sign of circumcision [as] a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had [while] uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all them who believe, though they be not circumcised.' Why?

' So that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and [so that he might also become] the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of our father Abraham while yet uncircumcised. For the promise [was] that he should be **the heir of the World!**'

Comments Calvin:³³⁰ "Abraham possessed righteousness before he had circumcision.... God had promised Abraham a seed that was blessed. For this seed, salvation was to be looked for -- for **the whole World**....

"There is now no necessity for circumcision where baptism exists.... Circumcision does not justify, because Abraham was justified by **faith** [and indeed **before** he was circumcised]. The same argument also holds good for us. We deny therefore that men are justified by baptism, since they are justified by the same faith as that of Abraham....

"The benefit," concludes Calvin, "belongs to the Gentiles as much as to the Jews.... ' He should be heir of the **World**' The apostle...[in fact] includes in the word ' World' ...the restoration which was hoped for from **Christ**.... It was...necessary that the fallen state of the **whole World** should be **repaired**."

Calvin on the wrath and grace of God in Romans chapter five

Romans 5:12-20 is by far the most important passage (in that book) bearing upon our subject. It indeed declares that ' all have sinned' ; and that ' death reigned from Adam' ; and that ' by the offence of one, [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation' ; and that ' many were made sinners.' The question is, however, whether all this necessarily implies the eternal damnation of all (or of any) who die in infancy?

The latter proposition is not stated in the passage. What **is** stated, however, is that even though 'by one man' s offence, death reigned by one **much more** they which receive abundance of grace and of the [God-given] gift of righteousness, shall reign in life.' For ' by the righteousness of One, [the free gift came]³³¹ upon **all** men unto **justification**.' Indeed, ' wherēsin **did** abound - **grace did much more abound**.' For grace now abounds '**much more**' than sin ever did!

Comments Calvin:³³² "The purpose of Christ' s coming, was to redeem us from the calamity into which Adam had fallen.... A clearer realization of what we possess in Christ, can come only when we have been shown what we have lost in Adam....

"Sin has spread to all who suffer the punishment of sin.... All of Adam' s posterity are subject to the dominion of death. It is because we have all sinned. To **sin** -- as the word is used here -- is to be corrupt and vitiated.

"The natural depravity which we bring from our mother' s womb, although it does not produce its fruits immediately, is still sin before God - and deserves His punishment. This is what is called original sin.... We have, therefore, all sinned. Because we are all imbued with natural corruption, and for this reason are wicked and perverse....

"' Death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam' s transgression' This passage is generally understood of **little children** - who, without being guilty of any actual transgression, die through original sin. **I prefer**, however, to interpret it generally - as referring to all those who sinned without the Law" - alias without knowledge of the **written Torah**.

"The apostle therefore wanted to imply that this difference between Adam and his posterity, could not exempt them from condemnation. **Infants are also in the meantime included** in the universal catalogue.... **The grace acquired by Christ belongs to a greater number [both a greater number and a greater number] than the condemnation** contracted by the first man.... The fall of Adam had the effect of producing the ruin of man. The grace of God is much more efficacious in benefitting many.... Christ is much more powerful to save, than Adam was to destroy....

"Christ **surpasses** Adam.... Since Christ surpasses Adam, the sin of Adam is overcome by the righteousness of Christ.... The blessing of life reigns and flourishes more and more through the abundance of grace.... We are condemned by Adam's sin - not by imputation alone, as though we were being punished for another's sin. But we suffer his punishment, because we too are guilty - since God holds our nature, which has been corrupted in Adam, guilty of iniquity."

Pessimistic modern hyper-calvinists and pseudo-calvinists allege that **not the number but only the quality** of the elect - exceeds that of the reprobate. Calvin himself, however - as already seen two paragraphs above - insists that "the grace acquired by Christ belongs to a **greater number** than the condemnation!"

Calvin on the bearing of Romans chapter five on infant salvation

Calvin continues: "The curse, which we derive from Adam, is conveyed to us **by nature**.... It includes the **whole** of mankind. In order, however, that we may participate in the grace of Christ - we must be ingrafted into Him **by faith**.... It is necessary...to be a **believer**, in order to enjoy the righteousness of Christ. For we attain to fellowship (*consortium*) with Him, by faith.

"**Fellowship with Christ is communicated to infants** in a peculiar way. They have the right of adoption into the covenant, by which they come into communion with Christ (*in Christi communionem*). I am referring to the children of the godly, to whom the promise of grace is directed. The others are by no means exempted from the common lot."

Even this latter statement, however, does not preclude God from sovereignly electing unto salvation some or all of those children of the ungodly. God may very well do so - by grace -- and indeed through a God-given personal faith in Christ.³³³

Dr. Calvin concludes:³³⁴ "Christ, Paul reminds us, was not privately righteous on His Own account. But the righteousness with which He was endowed, was **more extensive** - in order that He might enrich believers with the gift conferred upon Himself.

"**Paul makes grace common to all...because it is offered to all**.... Christ suffered for the sins of the World, and is offered by the goodness of God - without distinction - to all... ' Grace did abound more exceedingly' As soon, therefore, as the grace of Christ begins to prevail in individuals - the reign of sin and death ceases!"

Here, Calvin himself is quite clear. "**Paul makes grace common to all**" - and insists that "**it is offered to all**." Obviously, "**all**" must here necessarily include: all infants.

Calvin on the triumph of grace in Romans chapters six to nine

In Romans six, Paul deals with the need to live a godly life - **after** being baptized. In Romans seven, he deals with the possibility of any subsequently backsliding.

In Romans eight, he deals with the glorious certainty of the final victory yet to be attained by God' s elect. In Romans nine, Paul deals with the ground and consequences of their election.

Paul declares it is to the true "Israelites" alias those who by God' s grace are indeed faithful, that "the adoption" pertains. He continues: "Rebecca also conceived.... The children not yet having been born..., so that the purpose of God according to election might stand...it was said to her: ' The elder shall serve the younger!' " Romans 9:4-13.

"It is," Calvin here comments,³³⁵ "of some importance to be descended from saints and men loved by God." Since God has promised [all] the godly fathers mercy towards their children, even to a thousand generations."

Yet "not all the children of Abraham are the children of God." For of Isaac' s twin sons - alongside of the younger (Jacob), there was also the elder (Esau). Yet these two brothers "Jacob and Esau...were both the children of Adam [and] sinners by nature....

"God' swill was to show to the younger son a peculiar favour.... Those only are accounted sons, who are born of the pure and legitimate seed of doctrine." Mercifully, however, God never told [the elder son] Esau' s parents of his reprobation --neither before his birth, nor when he later became an ungodly adult.

In Romans 5:12f [*cf.* Hosea 6:7], Adam was deemed to have been holy before his fall. Nay, more! After his fall, by faith alone, he and his faithful descendants were engrafted into Christ the Second Adam - unto even greater holiness. Yet when many of Adam' s descendants (namely first the Gentiles and later the Jews) fell away into disbelief - they were again broken off the ' tree' of the covenant.

Calvin on the root and the fruits in Romans eleven

Yet, in Romans 11:16f, Paul does not indicate that any or all branches initially growing from an unholy root therefore themselves remain unholy. To the contrary, he says that some such branches are later grafted onto a holy root.

Indeed, Paul also says that even where ' unbelieving' and unfruitful branches are later broken off a holy root --they too will be re-engrafted, if they do not keep on abiding in unbelief. ' So shall all Israel be saved.... For God has concluded them all in unbelief, so that He might have mercy upon all.'

Comments Calvin:³³⁶ "Descendants have the same relationship to their parents from whom they spring, as the lump has to the first fruits, or the branches to the tree.... We should never think of the rejection of the Jews -- without being struck with dread and terror.

"The one thing which caused their ruin, was their despising of the divine judgment.... They were not spared, though they were natural branches. What then will become of us who are wild and alien branches, if we become excessively insolent?"

Here Calvin then concludes: "But if in regard to individuals you ask how anyone can be cut off after being grafted in, and how after being cut off he can be grafted in again - conceive of three modes of ingrafting, and two of cutting off! ... [Firstly:] The children of believers, to whom the promise is due according to the covenant made with their fathers, are grafted in. [Secondly:] So are those who received the seed of the Gospel - which either strikes no root, or is choked before it comes to bear fruit. Thirdly, the elect are grafted in....

"The first," explains John Calvin, "are cut off when they reject the promise given to their fathers.... The second are cut off when the seed is withered and destroyed....

"God has punished the unbelief of His people - but not, however, in such a way as to have forgotten His mercy.... He has often, at other times, restored the Jews - after He had apparently banished them from His Kingdom.... Paul shows...how much easier it would be...for the natural branches to derive their substance from their own root - if they are restored to the place from which they had been cut off....

"When the Gentiles **have** come in, the Jews **will** at the same time return from their defection to the obedience of faith.... The consummation of the Kingdom of Christ...is by no means confined to the Jews, but includes the whole World!"

Calvin on the unclean children in First Corinthians 7:14

In First Corinthians 7:14, the Apostle Paul makes an even stronger contrast between the ' holy' children of believers (or even of but one believing parent) - and the ' unclean' children of unbelievers. It is obvious that being ' holy' here qualifies such children to receive holy baptism. However, being ' unclean' disqualifies such children from receiving it.

Yet the crucial question is surely whether the word ' unclean' here of necessity means: subject to everlasting punishment, or not. It is very significant that neither Paul nor Calvin so claim.

Calvin comments³⁷ Paul "is speaking here not about the contracting of marriages, but about maintaining those which have already been entered into [when previously yet in unbelief]. For where it is a question of whether a man should marry an unbelieving woman, or a woman an unbelieving man, then this advice is relevant: ' Do not be yoked together with unbelievers! For there is no agreement between Christ and Belial.' Second Corinthians 6:14f....

"If the faith of a Christian husband or wife sanctifies a marriage - it follows that **all** the marriages of [fully two faithless spouses alias] **unbelievers**, are **'unclean'** [For] if your marriage was unclean - then the **children** born of it, would be **unclean**."

Yet in a marriage between an unbeliever and a believer - Calvin goes on - even "the ungodliness of one of the parents does not prevent the children from being conceived and born holy [First Corinthians 7:14].... The children of believers are set apart from others, by a certain special privilege.... There is a universal propagation both of sin and condemnation in the seed of Adam. All, therefore, to a man, are included in this curse.... **All** are in the same natural condition, so that they are subject not only to sin but also to eternal death....

"The fact that the Apostle ascribes a special privilege to the children of believers here, has its source in the blessing of the covenant - by the intervention of which **the curse of nature is destroyed**.... Those who were by nature unclean, are consecrated to God by His grace....

"The children of believers are made exempt from the common condition." However, this raises at least the possibility of the infants of unbelievers too being exemptible at least from the guilt of the sin of Adam imputed not only to them but also to the babies of believers.

For one should certainly not conclude from First Corinthians 7:14 that those conceived in unclean-ness - are therefore unclean-ible (even before their births)! Nor should one conclude that others who are conceived in holiness and who should to be baptized as infants, are irrebuttably to be presumed to be saved.

So, as regards the possibility of everlasting salvation for all of the unbaptizable early-dying babies of unbelievers - it is not of man (*viz.* of their parents). For it is of God (Who keeps on showing **mercy**).

Exactly the same is true of the possibility - nay more, not just the possibility or even the probability but the certainty - of the everlasting salvation also of the early-dying babies of believers. There too, their salvation is determined by their election and by their God-given faith as a fruit thereof - and not by whether they have been baptized or not.

Calvin on all being made alive in First Corinthians 15:21

In First Corinthians 15:21f, Paul declares: ' Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall **all** be made alive.'

Here, Calvin comments³³⁸ that "just as Adam did not die for himself alone but for us all, so it follows that Christ Who is the antitype did not rise again merely for Himself. For He came to restore **everything** which had been brought to ruin in Adam....

"In the fifth chapter of Romans, he [Paul] uses the same contrast. But with this difference.... There, he is dealing with spiritual life and death. But here, the point at issue is the resurrection of the body - which is the reward of the spiritual life."

It is hard to reconcile Calvin' s above comment, with the notion that any dying in infancy forfeit everlasting life. All (including even the elect) indeed die physically, because Adam sinned. It is precisely thereby that all human beings have become morally tainted. Yet Paul here says: ' in Christ shall all be made alive.' It is not easy to harmonize this with the everlasting reprobation of wicked **adults**. Still less easy is it to reconcile this with the notion of reprobating early-dying **infants**.

Certainly Calvin does not here mention the everlasting reprobation of any who die in infancy. To the contrary. See too Zwingli and Schaff on this very text, as explained previously above.³³⁹

Calvin on the children of disobedience in Ephesians 2:2

In Ephesians 2:2f, Paul refers to 'the children of disobedience.' This means adult worldlings, rather than tiny infants. For Paul then goes on to say that such are they who - caught up in 'the dust' of the 'flesh' - keep on fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' They are, however, 'naturally the children of wrath' -- alias, by their very nature, sinful people with whom God is righteously angry.

Now it is 'among' such very people - Paul reminds Christians - that 'we too all used to have our walk of life, in past times.' For then, we too 'were by nature the children of wrath' - even as the others, alias the rest, still are.

Here, Calvin comments:³⁴⁰ "We are **all** born dead. And we live dead [or keep on existing in our sins] - until we are made partakers of the life of Christ.... Because sin, the cause of death, reigns in us.... He pronounces all men without exception...to be guilty, until they are set free by Christ....

"By 'children of wrath' - understand **simply** those who are lost and deserving of eternal death. 'Wrath' means the judgment of God; so that 'the children of wrath' signifies those who are condemned before God.... They were so, by nature - that is, from their very origin, and from their mother's womb....

"This is a remarkable passage against the Pelagians and all who deny original sin.... [The Apostle] Paul affirms that we are born with sin, as serpents bring their venom from the womb. Others who deny that this is really 'sin' - are no less at variance with Paul's language. For where 'condemnation' is - there, must surely be sin.

"It is **not with blameless men** [and still less with **ignorant infants**] but with **sin** that God is angry [and indeed also with the wicked who love to keep on sinning]. Nor is it wonderful that the depravity which is inborn in us from our parents, is reckoned as sin before God. For while the seed is still hidden, He perceives and condemns it....

Explains Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin: "We are lost, by nature.... Nature is twofold. The first was created by God. The second is the corruption of it. This condemnation therefore which Paul speaks of, does not proceed from God but from a depraved nature.... We are not now born such as Adam was [when] at first created; but we are the adulterous seed of degenerate and sinful man....

"The mercy of God...was pleased to admit our fathers into His people.... The calling of the Gentiles is an astonishing work of divine goodness which ought to be handed down from parents to children and to grandchildren - that it may never be blotted out of men's minds."

To be sure, this is indeed referring to the universal sinful taint of man - even from the very womb. Yet it cannot be referring to everlasting reprobation. For if it were - then also those who are now Christians, would formerly have been 'everlastingly' (?) reprobate too.

Calvin: in Hebrews 2:13 Christ's incarnation destroys Satan

In Hebrews 2:13, the holy writer describes Christ's own testimony: 'Behold, I - and the children which God has given Me!' The holy writer himself then gives his own inspired comment thereon: 'Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood - He also Himself likewise partook of the same; so that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.' Hebrews 2:14f.

This may well imply that through the Son of God's incarnation, it was precisely as a just-conceived infant that the Lord Jesus Christ **positively** broke the penalty of original sin - in respect of **every** early-dying baby. For conversely, Calvin indeed remarks³⁴¹ how Paul's statements "that 'God sent forth His Son made of a woman' (Galatians 4:4) - and innumerable others - [**negatively**]...show that He was [also] subject to...the other infirmities of our nature....

"It is said 'Verily He took not on Him[self] the nature of angels, but He took on Him[self] the seed of Abraham' {so} 'that through death He might destroy him [namely the devil] who **had** the power of death.' Hebrews 2:16,14.... 'It behoved Him [Christ] to be made like unto His brethren, [so] that He might be a **merciful** and faithful high priest.' Hebrews 2:11,17....

"Christ assumed the nature of man and not that of angels. Hebrews 2:16." Why? "Because it was the human race that He **restored** to **favour**" - fallen men, but not fallen angels.

"This the Apostle means, when he says 'that He tasted death for **every man**.' Hebrews 2:9. By dying, He prevented us from dying.... He, by His death, purchased **life** for us."

Calvin: First John 3:7f tells tiny children the devil's works are destroyed

Lastly - in First John 3:7-10 - specifically God's 'little children' are assured that "he who keeps on sinning, is of the devil.' Yet 'the Son of God was manifested, so that He should destroy the works of the devil.

'Whosoever has been begotten by God, does not keep on sinning - for His seed continues to abide in him.... He cannot keep on sinning, because he has been begotten by God. Herein the children of God are revealed - and the children of the devil.'

Here, Calvin comments:³⁴² "We are not however to imagine two adverse principles, like the Manichees. For we know that the devil is not evil by nature, or by origin of creation, but by the vice of his own fall.... Where he said that some were born of God and some of the devil, John did not imagine...such as the Manichees dreamed. He means that the former are governed by the Spirit of Christ....

"He does not represent the children of God as wholly free from all vice.... Regeneration is so begun in us, that the remnants of the old man stay in us till death.... God's children must needs labour under faults, and sin daily....

Nevertheless, the Apostle' s contention stands firm.... All who are begotten of God, live righteously and godly, because God' s Spirit corrects the lusting of sin....

"The seed by which God regenerates His elect is both incorruptible and keeps its power for ever. I grant that it may sometimes be stifled, as in David [Psalm 51:5f]. But yet, when all godliness seemed to be extinct in him, a live coal was hidden under the ashes. Satan strives to root out whatever is from God in the elect. But when the utmost is allowed him, there always remains a hidden root which afterwards sprouts!"

The same is true of elect babies -- both in their infancy, and later when they grow up. Throughout, neither this Johannine passage nor John Calvin' s comment thereon either teaches or implies that any dying in infancy - are lost.

Calvin: children saved before and without infant baptism

In 1542, Calvin published his *Form of Administering Baptism*. There, he explains³⁴³ that the Apostle "Paul says (First Corinthians 7:14) that God sanctifies them from their mothers' womb - to distinguish them from the children of pagans and unbelievers. For this reason, our Lord Jesus Christ received the children that were brought to Him" by believing parents - "by declaring that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them."

Around 1546, Calvin wrote his *Antidote to the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent*. In that *Antidote*, he complained³⁴⁴ the Romanists at Trent "have been pleased to exclude infants from the Kingdom of God, who have been snatched away before they could be offered for baptism. As if nothing were meant when it is said that the children of believers are **born holy**! First Corinthians 7:14.

"Nay, on what ground do we admit them to baptism - unless that they are the heirs of promise? For did not the promise of life apply to them - it would be a profanation of baptism to give it to them. But if God has adopted them into His Kingdom - how great injustice is done to His promise, as if it were not of itself sufficient for their salvation!

"A contrary opinion, I admit, has prevailed - but it is unjust to bury the truth of God under any human error, however ancient.... In virtue of this promise, they are admitted to baptism - because they **are** considered members of the Church. Their salvation therefore has not its commencement in baptism - but, being **already** founded on the Word [viz. **pre**-baptismally], is **sealed** by baptism" subsequently.

In Calvin' s 1548 Appendix to his tract on *The True Method of Reforming the Church*, he states³⁴⁵ that "the children of believers, before they were begotten, were adopted.... The genuine children of Abraham, even before they are born, are the heirs of eternal life.... They may obtain salvation without baptism.... Because the promise which assigns life to them while still in the womb, has sufficient efficacy in itself. Hence it is, that Paul makes honourable mention of them as holy - First Corinthians 7:14 intimating that they are separated from the common race of mankind by virtue of the covenant....

"Paedobaptism rests on this ground, that God recognises those who are presented to Him by our ministry [of baptizing them], as **already** His Own.... The whole race of Adam is naturally under curse.... Infants themselves, before they see the light, are held involved in liability to eternal death....

"Believers beget their children not by the Spirit, but [by] the flesh. The natural condition of all, therefore, is in this alike - that they are obnoxious." That is to say, they are subject not only "to sin" but also to "eternal death."

However, "the special privilege which the apostle attributes to the children of believers, flows from the covenant. By the supervening of this, the curse of nature is destroyed.... Those who were by nature unholy, are consecrated to God by grace.... I then infer that children have need of regeneration.... This gift comes to them by promise.... Baptism follows as a seal....

John the baptizer was sanctified from the womb.... That passage [Luke 1:15 *cf.* 1:41]...I elsewhere produce...against the Anabaptists.... We too were aliens and sinners of the Gentiles, but were baptized by the command of Christ Who ordered that not saints only or the children of saints but that **all nations should be baptized**....

Thus Calvin denies that "baptism is to be denied to a [Judaistic] Jew or a [Moslem] Turk, if they request it." For it is "gross hallucination" to regard such a one as still being an "alien." For it is precisely by a newly-found "faith" in Christ - as an Ex-Judaistic or an Ex-Islamic brand-new Christian - that he or she would then request such a baptism!

"By **faith**, all who **were** most alien, **are** united into the family and body of Christ. And yet, this is no reason why they should not also be united to the Church by a formal rite as a more complete ratification of their ingrafting - the [baptismal] seal of confirmation being added.

"As to the children of Papists, the answer is easy.... They are validly baptized, I agree" - insists Calvin. Then he adds that his anonymous critic (perhaps the Gnesio-Lutheran Westphal) "falsely imagines that I regard them as strangers - because they were neither begotten of a holy father nor born of a holy mother. [However:] They cease not to be the children [or descendants] of saints, though it be necessary to go farther back for their origin.

"God does not stop at the first degree, but diffuses the promise of life to a thousand generations [*cf.* Exodus 20:5-6 & Isaiah 59:21]. Thus Paul - when he infers that if the root is holy the branches are also holy, and teaches that the harvest is consecrated in the firstfruits [Romans 11:16] - does not inquire what kind of father each had, but recognises all as holy who had sprung from Abraham and the other patriarchs."

Yet, continues Calvin, "baptism is profaned - if it is bestowed on aliens.... What distinction there is, between the children of Christians and Turks!" Yet nowhere does Calvin maintain that - for this reason - also the early-dying **infants** of Non-Christian Moslems are lost.

To the contrary. Also "even the Papists" who have "placed the absolute necessity in baptism - though this is absurd" (as already seen above) - are capable of producing baptizable babies and even covenant children "with the promise of **life** to a thousand generations."

Calvin next remarks also Papists "grant that a man of adult age may be saved without baptism - provided he has a wish for it. Why then should not the pious vows of parents exempt a newborn infant from punishment?" Or even the pious wish of the unbaptized babies?

Calvin versus the sacramentology of the Gnesio-Lutheran Joachim Westphal

Even during Luther' s lifetime, his right-hand man Philip Melanchthon had been seeking a *rapprochement* with Calvinism. This can already be seen in Melanchthon' s 1540*Confession Augustana Variata*. Luther himself did not oppose it - and Calvin warmly endorsed it at least four times.

Unfortunately, Luther died in 1546. Soon, extremist Gnesio-Lutherans began hounding Melanchthon - accusing him of being a ' Crypto-Calvinist.' Though pronouncedly anti-papal, they also attacked Calvin even more than they did the sacramental errors of Rome - some of which they shared, and towards others of which they themselves adopted rather similar positions. Nowhere is the latter seen so clearly, as in their own only Semi-Protestant sacramentology.

Especially the Gnesio-Lutheran Dr. Joachim Westphal undermined Philip Melanchthon - by opposing him for embracing an allegedly ' Crypto-Calvinistic' view of the sacraments. So too did the almost Neo-Manichaeic Croatian Theologian Matthias Vlacic, alias Flaccius Illyricus. So too did the German Tilemann Heshusius. In addition, Westphal attacked also Calvin himself - head-on.

So, in 1556 Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin published his *Second Defence of the Sacraments in Answer to the Calumnies of Westphal*. Speaking for his fellow ' Calvinists' against the Gnesio-Lutherans, John Calvin there wrote: "**We** give hopes that infants may obtain salvation without baptism.... We hold that baptism, instead of regenerating or saving them, only seals the salvation of which they were **previously** partakers....

"Let an Anabaptist come forward and **maintain** that [baptism] the symbol of regeneration is improperly conferred on the cursed children of Adam.... Either Westphal must remain dumb, or the only defence that can avail him is that the grace which was offered in the person of their parents is common to them [their infants]. Hence it follows that they are **not** absolutely regenerated by **baptism** - from which they **ought** to be **debarred**, did **not** God rank them among the **members** of His Son....

"The effect of the sacraments...makes those who are **already** ingrafted into the body of Christ, to be united to Him more and more.... The proper office of baptism is to ingraft us into the body of Christ - **not** that those who are [not] baptized should be altogether aliens from Him, but because God attests that He thus received them.... There are many sheep of Christ **without** [alias **outside** of] the Church....

"God gives the name of **sons**, continues Calvin, "to those to whom the inheritance of salvation has been promised in the person of their parents." Yet: "Did **not** God transmit His grace from

parents to children - to admit newborn infants into the Church would be a...profanation of baptism! But **if** the promise of God under the Law caused holy branches to proceed from a holy root - will you restrict the grace of God under the Gospel, or diminish its efficacy by withholding the testimony of adoption by which God distinguishes infants?

"The Law ordered infants to be circumcised on the eighth day.... Scripture declares them to have been holy from the womb.... Those whom God has **already** set apart for Himself, are rightly brought for baptism....

"Cornelius, **before** he was baptized with his household - having received the Holy Spirit [and] being adorned with the badges of saints, justly held some place among the children of God." Compare Acts 10:1-48 with 11:13-18.

"' Whoso[ever]believeth and is baptized, shall be saved' When fanatical men [or Anabaptists] impugn Paedobaptism - they argue from this passage [Mark 16:16], not without plausibility, that the order appointed by Christ is overthrown if **faith** do not **precede** baptism." This argument does overthrow Lutheranism and Romanism - but it vindicates Classic Calvinism, with its doctrine of the presumed regeneration of covenant children even **before** they receive their infant baptisms.

Calvin versus the sacramentology of the Gnesio-Lutheran Tilemann Heshusius

In 1561, the Gnesio-Lutheran Superintendent Heshusius dismissed a large number of Lutheran Ministers in Bremen for upholding the 1540 *Confessio Augustana Variata* rather than the *Invariata*. For such - being ' Crypto-Calvinists' - had in his opinion now openly revealed their allegedly Anti-Lutheran and apparently Calvinistic convictions! So Calvin himself immediately responded - in his very important treatise: *The True Partaking of the Flesh and Blood of Christ in the Holy Supper*.

There, Calvin began:³⁴⁶ "I must patiently submit to this condition which Providence has assigned me. Petulant, dishonest, rabid men - as if they had conspired together - must make me the special object of their virulence....

"A foul apostate by the name of Staphylus has lately started up.... From another quarter, one named Nicolas le Coq has begun to neigh against me.

"At length, from another sink, comes forth Tilemann Heshusius - of whom I would rather have the reader to form a judgment from fact and from his writings, than express my own opinion.... What shall I do with Tilemann Heshusius who, magnificently provided with a superb and sonorous vocabulary, is confident of prostrating by the breath of his mouth anything that withstands his assault?"

Of Tilemann, Calvin further states: "Let the reader consider how fiercely he sneers and tears at his master Philip Melancthon - whose memory he ought sacredly to revere.... For though there is some show about him, he does nothing more by his magniloquence than vend the old follies and frivolities of Westphal and his fellows....

"Are we not, **independently of baptism**, cleansed by the blood of Christ and regenerated by the Spirit? ... I teach in the Catechism, that the Supper is not unnecessary. Because we there receive Christ more fully - though **already**, by the faith of the gospel, He is so far ours and dwells **in** us. This doctrine, if we are to believe Heshusius, is not only absurd but insults the whole Ministry of the Gospel.

"Let him then accuse Paul of blasphemy for saying that Christ is formed in us, like the foetus in the womb! His well-known words to the Galatians are, ' My little children, for whom I again travail as in birth - until Christ Jesus be formed in you!' Galatians 4:19....

"The objection of Heshusius is - what then is to become of an infant which, immediately after being baptized, dies without having received the Supper? As if I were imposing a law on God, or denying His power of working when[ever] He pleases - **without** the aid of the Supper! For I hold with Augustine, that there may be invisible sanctification - **without** the visible signs....

"Hence, though God calls suddenly away from the world many who are **children** not in age merely but in **faith** - yet, one spark from the Spirit is sufficient to give them a **life**.... There is no ground, therefore, for his [Heshusius' s] attack upon me for saying that the communion of Christ is conferred upon us in different degrees - not merely in the Supper [and in baptism], but [**also**] **independently** of it."

Calvin: children tainted but not necessarily unregenerated

In the last (1559) edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* - Calvin gives us³⁴⁷ an extended discussion of the total depravity even of infants. This latter, he argues, is a consequence of Adam' s fall and the universal transmission of original sin.

"As Adam' s spiritual life would have consisted in remaining united and bound to his Maker," explains Calvin, "so estrangement from Him was the death of his soul.... He involved his posterity also, and plunged them in[to] the same wretchedness....

"Augustine laboured to show that we are not corrupted by [an] acquired wickedness, but bring an innate corruption from the very womb. It was the greatest impudence to deny this.... There is no ambiguity in David' s confession: ' I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' Psalm 51:5....

"All of us therefore, descending from an impure seed, come into the world tainted with the contagion of sin. Nay, before we behold the light of the sun, we are in God' s sight defiled and polluted. ' Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one,' says the Book of Job (14:4)!

"We thus see that the impurity of parents is transmitted to their children, so that all without exception are originally depraved.... The only explanation which can be given of the expression ' in Adam all died' [First Corinthians 15:22], is that he by sinning not only brought disaster and ruin upon himself but also plunged our nature into like destruction.... He infected

his whole seed. Paul never could have said that all are ' by nature the children of wrath' (Ephesians 2:3) - if they had not been cursed from the womb."

Calvin: the transmission of original sin cannot stop infant regeneration

Calvin goes on: "Adam, therefore, when he corrupted himself, transmitted the contagion to all his posterity.... Even our Saviour Himself declares that all are by [generation and/or at] birth vicious and depraved -- when He says that ' that which is born of the flesh, is flesh' (John 3:6); and that therefore the gate of life is closed against all -- until they have been regenerated....

"Corruption commencing in Adam is, by perpetual descent, conveyed from those preceding to those coming after them.... God was pleased to ordain that those gifts which He had bestowed on the first man -- that man [Adam] should lose, as well for his descendants as for himself.... Children come not by spiritual regeneration, but carnal descent.... Children descend not from the spiritual generation which the servants of God have of the Holy Spirit, but the carnal generation which they have of Adam."

Calvin goes on:³⁴⁸ "Though **godly** parents do in some measure contribute to the **holiness** of **their** offspring, this is by the blessing of God - a blessing, however, which does not prevent the primary and universal curse of the whole race from previously taking effect. Guilt is from nature, whereas sanctification is from supernatural grace....

"Even infants [and miscarried fetuses] bringing their condemnation with them from their mother' swomb, suffer not for another' s but for their own defect. For although they have not yet produced the fruits of their own unrighteousness, they have the seed implanted in them. Nay, their whole nature is as it were a seed-bed of sin -- and therefore cannot but be odious and abominable to God!"

This is certainly very strong language. It assuredly evidences that **all** infants - including those who are elect - inherit Adam' s sin and guilt. Yet it cannot imply that any of God' s elect are permanently stained with the guilt of Adam unto all eternity. Nor does it implies that any die in infancy before being regenerated.

Did Calvin believe all or any early-dying infants of pagans go to hell?

While defending the vital doctrines of predestination and reprobation against Romish ' free-willers' Calvin insists:³⁴⁹ "It was not owing to **nature** that they all lost salvation by the fault of one parent [Adam]. Why should they [the Romish free-willers] refuse to admit with regard to one man, that which against their will they admit with regard to the whole human race? Why should they, in cavilling, lose their labour?

"Scripture proclaims that all were, in the person of one, made liable to eternal death. As this cannot be ascribed to nature - it is plain that it is owing to the wonderful counsel of God. It is very absurd in these ' worthy defenders' [?!] of the justice of God, to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

"I again ask how it is that the fall of Adam involves so many nations with their infant children in eternal death without remedy - unless that it so seemed meet to God? Here the most loquacious tongues must be dumb.

The decree, I admit, is dreadful.... It is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be, before He made him - and foreknew, because He had so ordained by His decree."

The famous Calvinist Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff declares³⁵⁰ that John Calvin was here "arguing with Catholic advocates of free-will who yet admitted the damnation of unbaptized infants." Calvin himself, however, elsewhere stoutly rejects that latter heresy. See our main text above, between its references to footnotes 326 and 329.

Here, John Calvin is centrally discussing neither the election nor the damnation of infants. To the contrary. Here, he is centrally defending the doctrines of election and reprobation as such - against those who reject them. Indeed, this very chapter bears the title: "Refutation of the Calumnies by which this Doctrine [of Predestinated Reprobation] is Always Unjustly Assailed."³⁵¹

It is true that Calvin here does mention - though merely *obiter* (or only in passing) - the involvement of "so many nations with their infant children in eternal death." However, Calvin does not here specify the damnation of all or even of most nations **as nations** - nor of all or even of most of their infant children **as infants**. See Acts 10:34f and Calvin's comment thereon.³⁵² For both paganistic nations and paganistic children can repent and be saved.

Calvin never says reprobate infants die while still babies

It is altogether true that some infants are indeed reprobate from their very conception, and even from all eternity. Yet **Calvin does not say that any reprobated infants die in their infancy**. Nor would he agree any of them die even later as adults - without first incurring **personal or act-ual guilt**.

Calvin indeed states³⁵³ that "the children of the Jews...when made heirs...were separated from the heathen [and] were called a holy seed.... For the same reason, the children of Christians, or those who have only one believing parent, are called ' holy' - and by the testimony of the Apostle, differ from the ' impure' seed of idolaters." First Corinthians 7:14. Yet the great Protestant Reformer John Calvin still does not draw the conclusion that the ' impure' (or rather ' unclean' children are therefore certainly (or even probably) lost for ever (as the unredeemed subjects of everlasting punishment).

Finally, Calvin adds:³⁵⁴ "**Infants** who are to be saved - and that **some are saved at this age**, is certain -- must, without question, previously be regenerated by the Lord.... They bring innate corruption with them from their mother's womb.... They must be purified before they can be admitted into the Kingdom of God, into which [there] shall not enter **anything** that defileth. Revelation 21:27.

"If they are born sinners - as David and Paul affirm - they must either remain unaccepted and hated by God, or be justified.... The Judge Himself publicly declares that ' except a man [alias a human person] be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.' John 3:3.

"But to silence this class of objectors, God gave in the case of John the baptizer - whom He sanctified from his mother' s womb (Luke 1:15) - a proof of what He might do in others.... Indeed, **Christ was sanctified from earliest infancy - so that He might sanctify His elect in Himself at any age....**

"This, at least, we set down as incontrovertible.... None of the elect is called away from the present life - without previously being sanctified and regenerated by the Spirit of God....

"We deny...the power of God cannot regenerate infants.... It were dangerous to deny that the Lord is able to furnish them with the **knowledge** of Himself in any way He pleases....

"Some of those whom death hurries away in the first moments of infancy pass into life eternal. They are certainly admitted to behold the immediate presence of God."

Calvin: impiety of parents not a bar to salvation of their infants

As already seen, in 1559 John Calvin wrote a letter to his ex-student the Scottish Reformer Knox. "God' s promise," Calvin there explains,³⁵⁵ "comprehends not only the offspring of every believer in the first line of descent -- but extends to thousands of generations [Exodus 20:5f and Isaiah 59:20f]....

"The interruption of piety which has prevailed in Popery, has not taken away from baptism its force and efficacy.... Offspring descended from holy and pious ancestors [such as godly mothers and grandmothers], belong to the body of the Church - though their fathers and grandfathers may have been apostates." Isaiah 59:21; Acts 16:1; First Corinthians 5:1f & 6:9-20 & 7:14; Second Timothy 1:5. **See too at note 345f above.**

Also in 1559, in his *French Confession*, we see John Calvin (and his colleague Chandieu) maintaining:³⁵⁶ "We believe that all the posterity of Adam is in bondage to original sin.... This evil is truly sin, sufficient for the condemnation of the whole human race, even of little children in the mother' s womb - and that God considers it [to be sin] as such. Even after baptism, it is still of the nature of sin - but the condemnation of it is abolished for the children of God."

The language here is very precise. It does not say that condemnation is abolished for all or even for some baptized children - but not for unbaptized babies.

Nor does it say condemnation is abolished for all babies of believers, but not for any babies of unbelievers. Instead, it here says that condemnation "is abolished **for the children of God**" - whether baptized or not; and whether the infants of believers, or not.

Calvin condemns the Anabaptist Servetus for damning early-dying infants

John Calvin' s defence of his own baptismal views against those of the anti-trinitarian and anti-paidobaptistic heretic Servetus, are full of instruction. "Servetus, not the least among the Anabaptists" - observes Calvin³⁵⁷ - "wrongly assumes that infants...are unable to believe." To Miguel Servetus, for that reason all infants still "lie under condemnation."

However: "Servetus cannot show that by divine appointment, several years must elapse before the new spiritual life begins. Paul' s testimony is that, though lost by nature, **the children of believers are holy** by supernatural grace [Romans 11:16 and First Corinthians 7:14]....

"Servetus...adds...that the Apostles were fishers of men, not of children. I ask then: What does our Saviour mean, when He says that in the net are caught **all** kinds of fishes?"

What do the Scriptures say? Replies Calvin: "Matthew 4:19 [' I will make you fishers of men (*anthroopoon*); and 13:47 [' The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind' of fish]....

"I should like to know why - when the Evangelist uses the term *anthroopous* [or ' men' in Matthew 4:19], which comprehends the whole human race without exception - he [Servetus] denies that infants are included.... [Yet] when the office of teaching was committed to the Apostles - they were not prohibited from baptizing infants [Matthew 28:19]....

"Who [then] can infer...that baptism is to be denied to infants whom...the Lord consecrated to Himself by gratuitous adoption?"

Calvin' s view that Paidobaptism seals infant salvation

John Calvin then concludes: "We defer more to the authority of God, Who has seen it meet to consecrate infants to Himself.... I have made it apparent how feebly Servetus has supported his friends the Anabaptists.

"No sound man, I presume," adds Calvin, "can now doubt how rashly the Church is disturbed by those who excite quarrels and disturbances because of Paedobaptism.... How sweet it is to pious minds to be assured...that they [our children] are so much in favour with their heavenly Father, that He interests Himself in their prosperity.

Servetus, Calvin alleges elsewhere,³⁵⁸ "objects that Cornelius was baptized after receiving the Holy Spirit.... He objects that infants cannot be regarded as new men....

"But what I have said again and again, I now repeat.... From non-age...God takes His Own methods of regenerating." For indeed, "the children whom God gathers from this life - are without doubt regenerated by the secret working of the Spirit."

Continues Calvin against Servetus:³⁵⁹ "Whomsoever Christ blesses, He exempts from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God; but infants, it is known, were blessed by Him; therefore,

they are exempt from the wrath of God.... Christ does not summon infants as accused to the tribunal of God, but only denounces judgment on the contumacious [post-infantile persons] who reject the teachings of the Gospel which they have heard."

For argument' s sake, concludes Calvin, let us for a moment "here reason after the manner of Servetus." But then, "would there not be a plausible complaint against God...that He is cruel?" For then God, though "gratuitously condoning the crimes of His [adult or mature] enemies - had [then, in that case,] not rescued from death His own most ' innocent' images" - namely human infants!

Calvin condemns Castellio on the subject of infant damnation

To Calvin, the imputed guilt of Adam' s original sin lies at the root of all subsequent human sins (also in and of babies and even in the unborn). Thus, babies do not become sinners only when they start to sin overtly. They finally start to sin overtly, precisely because they are sinners stained with the guilt of Adam' s sin ever since their conception onward.

Against the heretic Castellio, John Calvin proclaims:³⁶⁰ "I detest this blasphemy [which denies the transmitted guilt of original sin] - wherever it is publically exposed.... You [Castellio] deny that it is lawful and right in God to condemn any mortals, unless it be on account of sin committed" by them themselves, personally.

Castellio had apparently alleged that Calvin had a warped view of God. To John Calvin, insisted Castellio, it must necessarily be that God ' casts innocent babes just taken from the wombs of their mothers under guilt of original death.'

"Well now!" retorted John Calvin. "Numberless mortals are taken out of life - while yet perfect infants. You [Castellio] had better then commence your virulent war against God Himself, Who [**supposedly**] ' casts innocent babes just taken from the wombs of their mothers under the guilt of original death.' "

Continued John Calvin to Castellio: "Then spit out your gall against a [false] god who is supposed to rip innocent babes from their mothers' breasts and cast them into everlasting death! He who does not detest such blasphemy - may curse me as much as he likes!"³⁶¹

Also the Synod of Dordt would later uphold Calvin against Castellio

Significantly, some fifty years after Calvin, also the Dutch Arminians would attempt to misuse quotations from that great Reformer - against the Dutch Calvinists. But the Calvinistic Synod of Dordt - as we shall later show (see at our notes 377-380 below) - would then thoroughly refute that Arminian falsification of Calvin' s own views.

In point of fact - as Calvin himself clearly taught elsewhere - such outcast infants are first born **again** (prior to their pre-baptismal early deaths). Consequently, Castellio would be quite wrong to assume that such infants had not **priorly** been imputed with Adam' s guilt.

Castellio would therefore also be quite wrong slanderously to allege that Calvin believed such outcast infants were unregeneratable, and therefore permanently lost.

For Calvin certainly did not teach the **universal** damnation to hell - of the early-dying infants of **all** ungodly persons. Actually, in his great comment on Ezekiel 16:20-21, Calvin calls the infants murdered by their own apostate parents - children of God ('**My** children').

Now it is true that these infants, like those of apostate ' Protestants' - or like those who had impious ' Romanistic' parents and grandparents - were themselves still covenant children³⁶². Yet it still establishes that Calvin believed that at the very least certainly some early-dying infants even of extremely ungodly parents - were justified and adopted by God as His very own children.

A fortiori, Calvin clearly believed³⁶³ that there are indeed "infants who are to be saved - and that some are saved at this age is certain.... None of the elect is called away from the present life without previously being sanctified and regenerated by the Spirit of God.... We deny the inference that...the power of God cannot regenerate infants.... Since some of those whom death hurries away in the first moments of infancy pass into life eternal, they are certainly admitted to behold the immediate presence of God."

Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin accordingly concludes:³⁶⁴ "I everywhere teach that no one can be justly condemned and perish, except on account of actual sin.... To say that the countless mortals taken from life while yet infants are precipitated from their mother' s arms into eternal death - is a blasphemy universally to be detested."

Summary of John Calvin's teaching on infant salvation

We have seen above that Calvin discerned the congenital stain of original sin after Adam' s fall and again at Noah' s flood. He stressed the 'adult-erous' wickedness of man at the deluge, and also traced the further operation of original sin right down to the time God destroyed 'adult-erous' Sodom and later yet the ungodly Esau.

Next, we saw Calvin, like Job, never said God sent pagan babies to hell. But Calvin did say that God spared especially the little children of the wicked Ninevites; and that Nineveh as such did not merit destruction. John Calvin seemed to regard: the trustful babies at Isaiah 11:8f as being safe; the wicked ' children' of the ungodly at Isaiah 14:21 as themselves being not babies but adolescents; and the children of the wicked in Jeremiah 19:3f as themselves being ' innocent.'

Further, we noted that Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin regarded the slaughtered infants of wicked covenant-breakers in Ezekiel as themselves being God' s children -- and that he regarded "the little ones" in Zechariah 13:7 as those to whom God would show mercy. Calvin believed: that babies could be born again already before they were born; that the lifted-up Christ saves ' whosoever trusts Him' ; that He indeed came to save the World (in John 3:15-21); and that infants are exempted from God' s abiding wrath in John 3:36.

We saw too how Calvin noted: that even ignorant adults are punished with fewer stripes than knowledgeable adults; that Jesus Christ healed the daughter even of a Canaanite woman; and that He came to seek and to save infants that were lost. It was seen that the Reformer: repeatedly denied any justificatory need for baptism; seems to have exempted infants from God' s wrath but not from His mercy in Romans chapters one to eleven; and was careful about the implication for infants of First Corinthians 7:14 & 15:21f, Ephesians 2:2f, and Hebrews 2:13.

It was also seen how John Calvin believed that First John 3:7f teaches Christ came to destroy the devil' s work, and that children are saved before and without infant baptism. He insisted against the many Anti-Calvinistic Gnesio-Lutherans such as Westphal and Heshusius - that many infants were regenerated long before their infant baptisms and that, though tainted, they are not necessarily unregenerated. For the genius of Geneva was convinced that original sin cannot stop infants from being regenerated. Consequently, it is therefore irresponsible to argue that any early-dying infants go to hell.

We further noted Calvin never said that reprobate infants die while still babies -- but that he does say the impiety of parents cannot bar the salvation of their tiny offspring. Indeed, Calvin very strongly condemned the anti-trinitarian Anabaptist Servetus -- also and even specifically for suggesting that those dying as babies are lost.

Last, Calvin viewed Paedobaptism as the seal of pre-existing infant salvation. Not surprisingly, then, he also condemned Castellio -- for damning early-dying infants. Indeed, as we shall later see, also the Synod of Dort would here uphold Calvin against Castellio.

VII. CHURCH AFTER CALVIN ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this present chapter, we shall look at the Post-Calvinian Church on the salvation of early-dying infants. First, we shall study the view of infant salvation taken by ' Early Protestant' Anglican Theologians - such as Bishop John Hooper, Cranmer' s Chaplain Thomas Becon, John Henry Blunt and Dr. Richard Hooker.

Next, we shall examine the views of those on the Continent - such as Drs. Peter Martyr Vermigli, Theodore Beza, and William Perkins. Then, we shall examine the early ' Calvinist Confessions' on infant salvation.

We shall then note the view of the Prolocutor alias the Moderator of the 1643^f Westminster Assembly - and indeed also of the famous *Westminster Confession* itself (and commentaries thereon) - anent infant salvation. We shall examine the views of then-contemporary Puritan Theologians such as Thomas Manton and John Owen on infant faith in those who die prematurely yet believingly - and contrast them with the singular views of Michael Wigglesworth.

Thereafter, we shall mark the views of later Calvinists - from Rev. Philip Doddridge to Dr. Matthew Henry, anent infant salvation. We shall then compare the views thereanent of John Wesley, with those of Augustus Toplady - and finally conclude by enumerating the similar views of John Newton, Lyman Beecher, and Thomas Scott.

The Early Protestant Anglican Church on infant salvation

The ' Early Protestant' Anglican Church in England was influenced first by Lutheranism and then by Calvinism. First under the increasing impact of incipient Lutheranism, yet still in the mould of Mediaeval Romanism, the 1536 *Ten Articles* of Henry VIII stated of baptism: "Infants and children dying in infancy, shall undoubtedly be saved thereby; and else not." In fact, the introductory prayer even in the (first) revision of the *Anglican Liturgy* - urged that children be received by baptism into the ark of the Church, "and so saved from perishing."³⁶⁵

Yet in the subsequent revision of 1552, the latter clause was rejected. By then, the influence of Zwingli and Bullinger was eclipsing that of Luther - and both the boy king Edward VI and his Regent (Lord Somerset) were strong Calvinists. Indeed, the ' calvinizing' Archbishop Cranmer, who framed that *Liturgy*, had by then rejected the "scrupulous superstition" of the necessity of infant baptism for salvation.³⁶⁶

On English soil in the middle of the sixteenth century, we find the evangelical Anglican, Rt. Rev. Bishop Dr. John Hooper. The godly Hooper was one of the first Reformers since Zwingli who very certainly taught the universal salvation of all early-deceased babies. For, in his 1547 *Answer to Lord Winchester*, Bishop Hooper very clearly taught that all infants dying during their infancy - whether children of Christians or of infidels - are saved.

Before he died in 1555, Hooper had insisted:³⁶⁷ "I would...judge well of the infants of the infidels who hath none other sin in them but [that sin called] ' original' - the sin of Adam' s transgression.... It shall not be against the faith of a Christian man to say that Christ' s death and passion extendeth as far for the salvation of innocents [alias babies] as Adam' s fall made all his posterity culpable of damnation.... Scripture also preferreth the grace of God' s promise to be **more abundant** than sin (Romans 5)."

The Anglicans Becon and Blunt on the salvation of the infants of heathen

Moreover, also Cranmer' s own chaplain Thomas Becon was a thoroughgoing Calvinist. For Becon clearly stated that just as many Israelitic children - *viz.* all of the little Israelitesses - were saved without circumcision. So too many Christian children and "**even those of Turks and Heathens**" or Moslems and Pagans - may be baptized ' spiritually' and thus "**saved without water baptism.**"³⁶⁸

In his *Dictionary of Doctrinal Theology*, the later ' High Anglican' John Henry Blunt called for caution. He did so in his *Institutions of a Christian Man*.

The occasion was when Blunt was discussing an Early Anglican baptismal phrase in the 1536 *Ten Articles* of Henry VIII (as revised). We mean the phrase: ' infants and children dying in their infancy, shall undoubtedly be saved thereby [*viz.* by baptism]; else not.'

For Blunt gives³⁶⁹ the revised wording thereof in the last revision of the *Prayer-book*. Those revised words read: ' It is certain by God' s Word that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved.'

"In other words," observes Rev. Dr. J.H. Blunt,³⁷⁰ "we are **certain** of the future happiness of the baptized [who die when still very young] - but have no assurance of the salvation of the unbaptized infant. The question must thus be left in obscurity, as we have no sufficient warrant to go beyond the cautious statement of our Church."

Similarly, see too the independently-minded Anglican, Rev. Dr. Richard Hooker.³⁷¹ While strongly stressing the importance of baptism, he too refused to rule out the possibility of salvation even to the unbaptized.

A ' charitable uncertainty' regarding the salvation of those babies **questionable** parents who themselves die young before being able to receive infant baptism - and, indeed, also regarding the salvation of all of the many early-dying infants of **unbelieving** parents -- is found among some of the Continental Reformers. Such include Vermigli, Beza, Pareus, Zanchius and the great Polish Reformed supralapsarian, Rev. Professor Dr. Jan Maccovius. Indeed, this ' charitable uncertainty' is found even in the English Puritan William Perkins.³⁷²

Those Theologians were uncertain about the salvation of **all** dying in infancy. Yet they were certain about the salvation of **some** who die while infants. That certainty was predicated not upon such infants being baptized - but upon their having at least one believing parent.

The Early Calvinist Confessions on infant salvation

On this point, as to the extent of infant salvation, the various early Calvinist Confessions are most cautious. The *Belgic Confession*³⁷³ and the *Heidelberg Catechism* are silent. However, one of the two authors of the latter - Zacharias Ursinus - does state that even "unregenerate infants who are outside the church have no actual impiety and wickedness, but only an inclination toward wickedness."³⁷⁴

The 1562-66 *Second Swiss Confession* (of the Reformer Henry Bullinger) makes a significant statement. It declares:³⁷⁵ "We know...that God can illuminate whom and when He will, even without the external ministry - which is a thing appertaining to His power."

The 1565 General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, opened in prayer by John Knox himself, resolved that even if Romish "children come never to the knowledge of true doctrine, they are left to the judgment of God." Indeed, the 1580 *Second Scots Confession* of John Craig even declares (against the Romish Church' s baptismal regenerationism): "We abhor and detest the cruel judgment against infants dying without baptism."³⁷⁶

The 1618 *Decrees of Dordt* not only assert that "God mercifully sends the messengers of...joyful tidings to whomsoever He will and at what time He pleaseth" so "that men may be brought to believe."³⁷⁷ Nor does *Dordt* teach the **salvation** of the **early-dying babies** only of **godly** parents.³⁷⁸ For *Dordt* also states that God "is merciful to whom He wishes" - and that Christ Himself prayed: "I thank You, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that You...**revealed** these things to **little babies**."³⁷⁹

In its Conclusion,³⁸⁰ *Dordt* repudiates the slander that "the Reformed churches" had taught till then "that many children of the faithful are torn guiltless from their mother' s breasts and tyrannically plunged into hell - so that neither baptism, nor the prayers of the church at their baptism, can at all profit them." Indeed, "such heresies" - the Conclusion insists - "the Reformed churches not only do not acknowledge, but even detest with their whole soul.

"Therefore, this Synod of Dordt, in the Name of the Lord, adjures as many as piously call upon the Name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to judge of the faith of the Reformed churches not from the calumnies which on every side are heaped upon it...but from the public **confessions** of the churches themselves." Lies, such as those that Calvinism insisted on the damnation of some dying in infancy, were thus exposed.

So it was not only Dutch Arminians like Curcellaeus and Limborch³⁸¹ who taught that "all infants...are saved by Christ from death." To be sure, such Arminians all did so for the incorrect reason - because they wrongly denied the full imputation of Adam' s sin to babies.

Yet many early Calvinists too taught the universal salvation of all dying in infancy. In their case, however, they did so not by heretically denying the imputation of original sin in any way - but for the right reason, namely by orthodoxly asserting the [prebaptismal] regeneration of those infants themselves.

Not just the ' Pre-Calvinist' Protestant Reformers Ulrich Zwingli and John Henry Bullinger opined that all early-dying infants - including even those outside the covenant - were saved rather than lost. So too did even Pre-Arminian stalwart Calvinistic ' Imputationists' like Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Junius.³⁸² Indeed, even though the great Rev. Professor Dr. Gisbert Voetius was not able to affirm whether the early-dying infants of the wicked were regenerated before their deaths - also he "did not **wish** to be destitute of" them.³⁸³

The Moderator of the 1643f Westminster Assembly on infant salvation

It is sometimes alleged that the illustrious Rev. Dr. William Twisse, Sometime Moderator alias Prolocutor of the 1643f Westminster Assembly, taught the damnation of the early-dying infants of infidels. Dr. Twisse was indeed a strict supralapsarian. However, even the later anti-Reformed Liberal, Dr. Briggs - in his citation of the controversy between Twisse and Heard - inadvertently disproved the above allegation.

According to Briggs,³⁸⁴ Dr. Twisse' s opponent Heard had apparently discussed the scenario of the everlasting damnation of early-dying Muslim babies. To this heinous horror of Heard' s, Rev. Dr. Twisse then first quite rightly responded: "**If many thousands [and] even all the infants of Turks and Saracens dying in original sin are tormented by Him** in hell fire - **is** He to be accounted the Father of cruelties, for **this**?"

Nevertheless, Twisse then **also** went on to add: "I profess [that] **I cannot devise a greater show and appearance of cruelty than in this!** Now, I beseech you, consider the spirit that breathes in this man [Heard]! Dare he censure God as a Father of cruelties, for executing eternal death upon those who are **guilty** of it?"

There can be no question that Twisse indeed believed all babies - also including those born to believing parents - were **guilty** before God **because** of their inheriting Adam' s original sin. However, it does not at all follow from this that Twisse therefore further opined that all or even any early-dying babies are lost. For **at least** some and perhaps even all early-dying babies are **regenerated before they die**. See the *Westminster Confession of Faith* 10:3 - which Twisse himself approved.

Indeed, Twisse himself seems to recoil at the very suggestion that the **infants** of specifically Non-Christian Muslim parents should be construed as being tormented **in hell**. To Twisse - and to other undiluted Calvinists just like him - **that** constitutes "the appearance of **cruelty**."

Consider too the following excerpts³⁸⁵ from Twisse' s great book *The Riches of God's Love unto the Vessels of Mercy consistent with His Absolute Hatred or Reprobation of the Vessels of Wrath*. "God," wrote Dr. Twisse, "is ready to bestow these benefits on all and every one - and that for Christ' s sake - in case they believe. So Christ hath merited pardon of sin and salvation for all and every one, in [the] case [that] they believe.... The doctrine delivered in the Gospel is such...as may justly make them [quite] inexcusable that do not believe....

"If a man had a will to obey and believe but he could not, in such a case it were unreasonable he should be punished. But in the case of disobedience unto [the] God we speak of, all the

fault is in the will, voluntarily and wilfully.... God commanding all to hear the Gospel to believe, doth not hinder them from believing when they are willing to believe....

"Not any of our divines was, I think, ever known to maintain that God did intend to damn any man but for sin.... God will condemn all such as **finally persevere** in sin."

Is this language descriptive of **early-dying infants** then indeed conceived in **Adam** s original sin? Hardly! Yet even if it was - it still could not be separated from those children' s own **act-ual** sins alias their personal transgressions.

The Westminster Confession on infant salvation

This then brings us to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* 10:1-3 itself. This chapter (' Of Effectual Calling') - as distinct from the previously-mentioned similar but personal views of Westminster' s Prolocutor or Moderator Dr. Twisse - reads in part as follows:

"All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased in His appointed and accepted time effectually to call by His Word and Spirit out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God....

"This effectual call is of God' s free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man - who is altogether passive therein until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit.... Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word."

The context of the above is all-important. It is **not** - not **centrally** - discussing the doctrine of **election**; nor the electness or non-electness of infants; nor those dying in infancy. Still less is its central concern the percentage - whether 100% or 50% or whatever - of those dying during infancy who are among the elect. Neither is it centrally concerned with early-dying infants, and still less with dividing such infants into ' elect' and ' non-elect' categories.

As indicated by its chapter heading, the context here is centrally concerned with **effectual calling**. It insists that **all** those God has predestinated to life, in His good time, are effectually called (before their death). In this effectual call, unsaved man [even when an adult] is altogether passive - until renewed by God' s Spirit. Even elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated through that same Spirit. So too are all other elect persons incapable of being called outwardly.

The *Confession* at its 10:3, then, has never taught that only some of those dying in infancy - are elect. Still less has it ever implied that others dying in infancy are not elect. It has always taught that even when God' s elect die while yet infants, they must first be regenerated through His Spirit. For indeed, they must first (however incipiently) be brought to faith in Christ before they die, in order to please God. John 3:3-8 & Hebrews 11:6.

The *Confession* does not here (or elsewhere) address the question as to whether all early-dying persons are elect; whether most of such are elect; whether they are sometimes elect; or whether they are rarely elect. The emphasis here is **not** on the possible **un**-regeneratedness of **any** who die in infancy. The stress is rather on the **re-generatedness** of all of the elect before they die, and therefore even on the **re-generatedness** of such of the elect as **die during infancy**.

Indeed, **all** of the footnotes given at this point in the original *Confession* itself - are highly significant. They are: Luke 18:15f; Acts 2:38f; John 3:3f; First John 5:12; and Romans 8:9.

These passages all establish either the present **regeneratedness** or the soon **regeneratability** also of infants and other persons. But they do not establish any alleged non-regeneratability or even non-regeneratedness.

Consequently, then, the *Confession* 10:3 neither affirms nor denies that early-dying infants of unbelievers are among the non-elect. However, it indeed teaches that all early-dying elect infants (whether of believing or of unbelieving parents) certainly become regenerated before they die.

Commentaries on the Westminster Confession chapter X:3 (I)

It is significant that at Session 509 of the Westminster Assembly on September 29th 1645, it was proposed "that something be expressed in fit place concerning infants' regeneration in their infancy." Too, at Session 566 on January 5th 1645, at the "Debate upon Baptism" - it was proposed to the Assembly that "the grace of God [is] bestowed sometimes before" the baptizee receives that Sacrament. Especially Rev. Jeremiah Whitaker (M.A.) of Yorkshire and Rev. Herbert Palmer (B.D.) of Kent were then vehement about this point.

Palmer had himself been sanctified from the womb, and he later held family worship for his entire household twice daily and at mealtimes. The same was similarly true also of the Presbyterian Whitaker.

According to the *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly*, Mr. Whitaker argued before that body in the ' Debate upon Baptism' : "that it do ~~not~~ **confer** [or **initiate**] grace, I do **not** find...our divines do hold.... I can say that...the Sacrament of the **Lord sSupper** [is] a means of confessing **growth**, where grace **already** is. In the **same** proportion of reason, it will hold [also] about **Baptism**."

Thereafter, also Mr. Palmer then added: "We must suppose the person to be baptized, to be a believer" **already**. Thus, Palmer agreed with Whitaker that **faith** should **precede** baptism - even in **infants**.

Very significantly, this view is reflected also in the *Westminster Assembly's Directory for the Publick Worship of God*. For it states that "**believers** and their **seed**...are **Christians** and federally holy **before baptism** and **therefore** are to be **baptized**."³⁸⁶

The above is also our own perception. Indeed, here, while precisely the *Westminster Confession* is **possibly** implying *obiter* (at 10:3) that all who die in infancy are elect - it both there and also elsewhere **certainly never** either states or implies that any who die in infancy are among the non-elect. Indeed, **all** of the elect who die in infancy **without** baptism, are **regenerated before** and irrespective of **baptism**.

This latter view is borne out too by the various 'Commentaries' on the *Westminster Confession*. Here we refer initially to those of Shaw, Hodge and Schaff. Hereafter we shall further refer to those of Warfield, Green and Clark.

Rev. Professor Robert Shaw (of the Original Secession Synod), citing the views of Rev. Professor Dr. Robert Dick with approval, explains of "infants [that]...their regeneration must be effected without means.... It would be harsh and unwarrantable to suppose that they are, on this account, excluded from salvation."³⁸⁷

Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge (of the Northern Presbyterian Church alias the PCUSA) comments³⁸⁸ that "if infants and others not capable of being called by the gospel are to be saved, they must be regenerated and sanctified immediately by God.... God could create Adam holy, without means.... He can certainly make infants and others regenerate, without means.... The phrase 'elect infants' is precise and fit for its purpose. It is not intended to suggest that there are any infants not elect" who die as babies.

The Swiss-American Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff (of the German Reformed Church USA) comments³⁸⁹ that "the Reformed Church teaches the salvation of all elect infants dying in infancy, whether baptized or not, and assumes that they are regenerated before their death - which, according to Calvinistic principles, is possible without water-baptism. *Westminster Confession* 10:3.... 'So also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word.'

"The **last** sentence may be fairly interpreted as teaching the election and salvation of a portion of 'heathen **adults**.... The *Confession* nowhere speaks of reprobate infants [dying as babies], and the existence of such is not necessarily implied by way of distinction.... The interpretation of Dr. A.A. Hodge...is fairly admissible."

Commentaries on the Westminster Confession chapter X:3 (II)

In respect of this same section in the *Westminster Confession* (10:3), also Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield rightly maintains: "The opinion that a body of **non-elect infants dying in infancy** (and not saved) is implied in this passage, really is not only a wholly unreasonable opinion exegetically." It is also "**absolutely negated** by the history of the formation of this clause in the [Westminster] Assembly as recorded in the *Minutes*....

"Indeed, this incorrect opinion never found favor among the expositors of the *Confession*. David Dickson' s (1684) treatment of the section, shows that he understands it to be directed against the Anabaptists [who denied the need for and the possibility of infant regeneration].... All careful students of the *Confession* understand it as above - including Shaw, A.A. Hodge,

Macpherson, Mitchell and Beattie.... The same is true of...Lyman Beecher.... Cf. also Philip Schaff."

Rev. Professor Dr. J.B. Green of the Southern Presbyterian Church (alias the PCUS) comments³⁹⁰ that "this section...was not a part of the original draft of this chapter.... The bone of contention has been the clause ' elect infants dying in infancy' There **atwo** possible implications.

"One makes the antithesis to be ' non-elect infants dying in infancy.' This view gives occasion for the slander sometimes heard that Presbyterians teach or have taught infant damnation. The other possible implication makes the antithesis to be ' elect infants **not** dying in infancy.' This is the **proper** way to fill out the meaning, according to the **defenders** of the *Confession*.... Let the silence of the *Confession* be respected. It has the right to be judged by what it says, and not by what it omits to say."³⁹¹

Rev. Professor Dr. Gordon Clark (of the Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod) once commented³⁹² that "Presbyterians had never held that all who die in infancy, are lost. What the *Confession* is interested in, is whether any dying in infancy can be saved. If salvation unexceptionally depended on hearing..., no child who died in infancy could be saved. Nor could any imbecile. Section iii declares that infant salvation is possible....

"The *Confession* neither asks nor answers how many who die in infancy are saved.... The proof texts given in the footnote, are taken...to show that all elect persons, whether infants or adults, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the preaching of the Word, are regenerated and saved notwithstanding."

Later, the *Westminster Confession* (28:6) further states that "the grace promised is...conferred by the Holy Ghost to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto." Here again, the regeneratability of infants is presupposed.

Manton: Hebrews 11:6 implies that also infants need to believe

Rev. Dr. Thomas Manton joined with other British Puritans in writing the *Commendation of the Westminster Standards to the Christian Reader and especially to Heads of Families*. He himself also wrote a personal *Epistle to the Reader of the Westminster Standards*. More importantly, elsewhere he insisted on the possibility and necessity of faith -- also in infants.

Thus Manton comments at length on the verse: ' Without faith, it is impossible to please Him; for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.' Hebrews 11:6. This can only mean that even all babies - be they the infant children of believers or of unbelievers - must themselves have a God-given faith in Christ, in order to be able to please God.

Explains Manton:³⁹³ "Children must have some kind of faith, else they can never be accepted to life.... Let it be premised that the question is concerning the infants of believing parents. As for others, we leave them to the judgment of God....

"I confess some among the orthodox think that all infants that die in infancy belong to God' s election. So [Rev. Professor Dr. Francis] Junius. And so Mr. [George] Fox upon Revelation 7:9, where there is a distinction between the sealed and unsealed - which [latter] he applied to unbaptized infants both in[side] or out[side] of the Church....

"I answer as for those that are born out[side] of the Church, we have no warrant to judge them. As the Apostle saith in somewhat a like case - First Corinthians 5:12 - ' What have I to do to judge them that are without?' "

Thomas Manton concludes: "Those that are born without [or outside] the ' place of grace' - are [**ac**]counted unclean. But others [are instead accounted as] holy, dedicated to God. First Corinthians 7:14. ' Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy'

"There is a difference between infant and infant. The children of unbelieving parents are plainly asserted by the Apostle to be unclean. We cannot have **such** comfortable hopes of them, and cannot say they **are** saved. Therefore we must **leave** them to **God** s judgment."

Owen: early-dying infants are justified by regeneration

Important is the Puritan Calvinist John Owen' s opposition to the views of the arminianizing John G. Goodwin (not to be confused with the Puritan Thomas Goodwin). "I rather," John G. Goodwin had said,³⁹⁴ "conceive **that** [to be] ' regeneration' - which the Scripture makes appropriable only unto persons living to **years of discretion**."

Yet this is how the great British Puritan Rev. Dr. John Owen, in return, challenged John G. Goodwin: "Sir, [where is] your proof? We cannot take **your** bare word, in a thing of this importance....

"If none but men of ' discretion' can be born of the Spirit - then infants have no other birth but only that of the flesh, and...[so are] not capable of entering into the Kingdom of Heaven. Surely **you** [J.G. Goodwin] better deserve the title of *durus pater infantum* [alias ' hard father of infants'] than he of old to whom it was given [i.e. Augustine]! Perhaps a grosser figment was never framed by ' a man of discretion.'

"It is true, infants are **comparatively** innocent in respect of **actual transgressions**.... The qualifications of infants not regenerated, are merely negative.... [However,] ' without faith it is impossible to please God.' Hebrews 11:6....

"That infants have or may have **faith** and **not** be **regenerated** - will scarcely be granted.... Of the effects of the death of Christ in respect of all children, I shall not now treat.

"That they should be saved by Christ and yet not [be] washed in His blood - not [be] sanctified by His Spirit (which to be, is to be regenerate) - is another [and an entirely] new notion." Indeed, from any kind of a Biblical perspective - it is an impossible notion!

Owen's repudiation of the Arminians "faithless infants' salvation"

Now the Arminians were even then quite vociferously advocating the universal salvation of all infants - **without regeneration**, and **without faith** in Christ. John Owen rightly repudiated this.

Yet Owen, that very greatest of all British Calvinists, did **not over-react** against this -- into a hypercalvinistic denial or even in any way toward a minimization of infant salvation. Nor, on the other hand, did he ever over-react in the other direction - into a denial of the constant need for ongoing subsequent reconversion(s) even for regenerated infants.

"They tell us plainly," wrote Owen of the Arminians, "that ' God will not [pre-]destinate any infants to eternal punishment for original sin, without their own proper actual sins; neither can He do so by right or in justice.' So that the children of Turks, Pagans and the like Infidels (strangers from the covenant of grace) departing in their infancy - are far happier than any Christian men who must undergo a hard warfare against sin and Satan, in danger to fall finally away at the last hour!" At least, that is what the Arminians say, observed Owen.

Owen then asks anent such early-dying children outside the covenant: "What shall be the certain lot of those that depart this life under the guilt of this sin only?" He himself then responds: "St. Paul saith, ' We judge not them that are without' (especially infants). First Corinthians 5:13....

"Our Saviour expressly affirmeth that ' except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' John 3:3-5....

"Let them that can, distinguish between a not going to Heaven and a going to Hell! A **third** receptacle of souls in the Scripture [such as Romanism's Limbo and/or Purgatory], **we** find not. St. Paul also tells us that ' by nature we are the children of wrath.' Ephesians 2:3....

"No unclean thing shall enter into Heaven, Revelation 21:27 - with which Hell-deserving uncleanness, children are polluted.... Unless it be purged with the blood of Christ, they have no interest in everlasting happiness.... Yet do **we not** peremptorily censure to Hell all infants departing this world without [baptism as] the laver of regeneration....

"Two ways there are whereby God saveth such infants, snatching them like brands out of the fire. First, by interesting them in the covenant - if their immediate **or remote** parents have been believers. He is a God of them and of their seed, extending His mercy unto a thousand generations.... Second, by His grace of **election** - which is most free and **not tied to any conditions**....

"I make **no doubt but God taketh many unto Him in Christ** - whose **parents never knew, or had been despisers of, the Gospel**.... This is the doctrine of our church, agreeable to the Scripture, affirming the desert[s] of original sin to be God's wrath and damnation. To both [of] which -- how opposite is the Arminian doctrine!"

Wigglesworth: early-dying infants of unbelievers are lost forever

Yet Arminianism was not the only threat to the Reformed Faith. Against the soteriological caution of the *Westminster Standards* and that of then-contemporary Puritan Calvinists like Manton and Owen, another danger soon arose - viz. the horror of Hypercalvinism!

In 1662, quite out of step with Calvin's Calvinism as well as with British Puritanism -- and more akin to Mediaeval Romanism - the maverick semi-neoplatonized Michael Wigglesworth of Massachusetts published his influential poem *The Day of Doom*. In his other poem *God's Controversy with New England*, Wigglesworth had rightly declared: "For Christians' children are an holy seed."³⁹⁵

In *The Day of Doom*, however, Wigglesworth wrote (*inter alia*) about reprobate infants who die while babies - and who were then by him consigned to Hell for ever.³⁹⁶ This is how Wigglesworth there describes the Final Judgment:

"Then to the Bar they all drew near who died in infancy,
and never had or good or bad effected pers' nally;
but from the womb unto the tomb were straightway carried -
or, at the least, ere they transgress' d."³⁹⁷

Michael Wigglesworth soon goes on to present his own portrayal of Christ then sentencing these reprobate infants. "The glorious King," alleges Wigglesworth, on the Day of Doom tells those who had died when babies:

"You sinners are; and such a share, as sinners, may expect.
Such you shall have! For I do save none but Mine Own elect.
Yet to compare your sin with theirs who liv' d a longer time,
I do confess yours is much less - though every sin' s a crime.
A crime it is. Therefore, in bliss you may not hope to dwell.
But unto you I shall allow the easier room in Hell!"³⁹⁸

The above is morbid, if not even somewhat pathological. These lines incurred for Wigglesworth the scorn of later *literati*.

"The temper of the poem," as Rev. Dr. R.J. Rushdoony has remarked,³⁹⁹ has a "harsh, wooden perspective.... Wigglesworth, throughout *The Day of Doom*, portrays those who are being sent to Hell - as desirous of Heaven. For this, there is no scriptural evidence.... The neoplatonist, however, sees all souls as inescapably drawn to God and to Heaven....

"If we remove the religious terminology from Wigglesworth's *Diary*, he becomes a surprisingly modern figure. He has the morbid introspection of *Portnoy's Complaint* and of modern psychiatric patients. He has the cold, calculating mind of the modern intellectual, devoid of personal warmth and feeling, and using people in terms of his needs."

So, according to semi-neoplatonized hypercalvinist Michael Wigglesworth - on the Day of Judgment, Christ reasons rationalizingly and at very great length even with resurrected

reprobates who died as babies. Because less guilty than other reprobates who died as adults, Wigglesworth assigns these early-dying 'reprobate infants' - everlastingly - to "the easiest room in Hell."

Indeed, Romish Limbo here rides again.⁴⁰⁰ Or, to be altogether very candid, even something considerably worse than Limbo. For Limbo is supposed to be outside of Heaven and Hell - and not, as Wigglesworth alleges for reprobate infants - the easiest room in Hell.

Calvinism also from Doddridge onward stressed universal infant salvation

However, over against the maverick Wigglesworth' s morbidity - it is very significant that leading British Calvinists both then and thereafter clearly taught universal infant salvation. And why not? For thus had Calvinists everywhere tended to teach - before Wigglesworth.

Such included Philip Doddridge, Thomas Scott, John Newton, Augustus Toplady - and, later, Robert Candlish. Leading American Calvinists soon arguing the same, included: Rev. Professors Dr. H.B. Smith, Charles Hodge, A.A. Hodge, G.L. Prentiss, W.G.T. Shedd, and B.B. Warfield.⁴⁰¹

Indeed, even in Wigglesworth' s own day - we encounter the refreshing remarks of the great anti-Amyrauldian and highly-orthodox Calvinist and Italian-French Swiss Theologian, Franciscus Turretini. His impact also on American Presbyterianism and even on Australian Presbyterianism, has been extremely great.

Turretine, regarding infants universally, said:⁴⁰² "Christian love commands us to hope well for their salvation.... [For] whosoever truly believes..., is elect.... Although the sense of the divine love may for a time slumber in the sons of God..., yet it is never shaken off....

"The Gospel sentences no one to damnation on account of original sin alone.... All the called who resist vocation and reject the grace offered through the Gospel, will be condemned on account of unbelief - in which sense the words of Christ (in John 3:18 & 3:36) must be understood.... The not-called...cannot be damned [merely] on account of the rejection of Christ concerning Whom they have **never heard**."

The Lord "God is pleased with the conversion and eternal life of the sinner...as a thing...agreeing with His perfectly-merciful nature...rather than with his [the sinner' s] destruction.... He [God] wills not - that is, is not pleased - with the death of the sinner!"

Matthew Henry: Jonah three s salvation of early-dying babies

The British Presbyterian Rev. Dr. Matthew Henry - within just several decades after the Westminster Assembly - reflected deeply upon the salvation of ancient Nineveh, after the city as a whole repented. *A fortiori*, he seems to have conceded **salvation also to the infants of those Ninevites**.

A fast was proclaimed by God to the ungodly Ninevites through Jonah (3:7f). Urged Jonah: ' Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth!' Thereupon, the ungodly adults repented. ' Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way.'

Significantly, God proceeded to spare not just those adults - but also their infants. Indeed, God even spared their dumb beasts of burden.

Clearly, the dumb beasts had no sin to repent of. Yet they too were spared, when their ungodly adult owners repented of their sins.

It is therefore indeed a moot question whether the infants of the ungodly themselves repented; could repent; or needed to repent - the way the adults did. Yet it is certain that God spared them -- even though Jonah 4:11 suggests "that they cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand." Notwithstanding that, God had mercy upon them - in spite of the awful evil committed by their own immediate parents.

Explains Dr. Matthew Henry⁴⁰³ in an extended discussion: "On the day appointed [for the fast]..., let them not take the least refreshment! ... Even the ' beasts' must do penance, as well as men - because they had been made ' subject to vanity' as instruments of man' s sins; and that, either by their complaints or their silent pining for want of meat, they might stir up their owners and those that attended them to the expression of sorrow and humiliation....

"When the Ninevites were full of sorrow for sin and dread of God' s judgments, they would have the inferior creatures concur with them in the expressions of it. The beasts that used to be covered with rich and fine trappings, which were the pride of their masters, and theirs too - must now be ' covered with sackcloth'

" Let them cry mightily to God!' Let even the brute creatures do it, according to their capacity! Let their cries...for want of food be graciously construed as cries to God, as the cries of the 'young ravens' are [Job 38:41] and of the 'young lions.' Psalm 104:21 [& 147:9].

But especially let the men, women and **children** ' cry to God.' Let them ' cry mightily' for the pardon of the sins which cry against them!"

Matthew Henry: those in Jonah four who “do not know their right hand” are infants

Continues Dr. Henry: "Nineveh...is a ' great city' and very populous - as appears by the number of the **infants**, suppose from two years old and under. There are a ' hundred and twenty thousand' such in Nineveh - that are not come to so much use of understanding as to know ' their right hand from their left.' For they are yet but babes.

"These are taken notice of, because the age of infants is commonly looked upon as the age of innocence [cf. Psalm 106:36-38 and Jeremiah 2:34 & 19:3-9 and Matthew 2:16-18]. So many there were in Nineveh that had not been guilty of any actual transgression - and, consequently, [that] had not themselves contributed to the common guilt....

"Yet, if Nineveh be ' overthrown' - will all be involved in the common calamity? And ' shall not I spare' Nineveh then, with an eye to them?"

"God has a tender regard to little children, and is ready to pity and succour them. Nay, here a ' whole city' is spared for their sakes!"

"That may encourage parents to present their children to God - by faith and [by] prayer.... Though they [their children] are not capable of doing Him any service - for they cannot discern ' between their right hand and their left,' between good and evil, sin and duty - yet they are capable of participating in His favours, **and of obtaining salvation**...."

"God took notice of the abundance of ' cattle' too that were in Nineveh - which He had more reason to pity and spare, than Jonah had to pity and to spare the gourd. Inasmuch as the animal life is more excellent than the vegetable...."

"The persons in Nineveh whom God had compassion on, were all the ' work of His Own hands' - whose beings He was the Author of; whose lives He was the Preserver of; whom He planted and ' made to grow.' He ' made them' - and His they were...."

"Therefore He had such more reason to have compassion on them. For He cannot ' despise the work of His Own hands.' Job 10:3.... Thus Job there argues with Him (vv. 8-9): ' Thy hands have made me and fashioned me' - have ' made me as the clay' ' Wilt Thou destroy me - ' wilt Thou bring me into dust again?' "

Matthew Henry then continues: "One soul is of more value than the whole World, and the **gain** of the World will not countervail the **loss** of it. Surely then, ' one soul' is of more value than ' many gourds' - of more value than ' many sparrows!' So God ' accounts' - and so should we, and have a greater concern for the ' children of men' than for any of the ' inferior creatures.' "

We too, concludes Henry, should have a greater concern "for our own and others' precious souls - than for any of the riches and enjoyments of this world.... There is one ' Lord over all, Who is rich in mercy to all that call upon Him'"

"In ' every nation' (in Nineveh as well as in Israel), ' he that fears God and works righteousness, is accepted of Him [Acts 10:35]. He that repents and turns from his evil way, shall find mercy with Him."

Matthew Henry: not God s will that any infant should perish (in Matthew 18:1-14)

One reads in Matthew 18:1-14 that once, "the [adult] disciples came to Jesus saying: ' Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?' Then Jesus called a little child unto Him, and placed him in their midst and said: ' Truly I tell you, unless you keep on being converted and become like little children - you shall not keep on entering into the Kingdom of Heaven!"

" Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones who believes in Me - it were better for him that a heavy stone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the deep sea...."

Take heed [therefore] that you do not despise one of these little ones! For I tell you that in Heaven their angels always keep on beholding the face of My heavenly Father.

"For the Son of man has come to save that which was lost.... Even so, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish." "

Here, Henry comments: "Grown men and great men should not disdain the company of little children, or think it below them to take notice of them. They may either speak to them and give instruction to them; or look upon them and receive instruction from them...."

"Beside the first conversion of a soul from a state of nature to a state of grace, there are after-conversions from particular paths of backsliding - which are equally necessary to salvation. You must **'become as little children!'** ... As **children**, we must desire the sincere **milk** of the Word. First Peter 2:2.

"As children, we must be careful for nothing [or not be worried about anything] - but leave it to our heavenly Father to care for us. (Matthew) 6:31. We must, as children, be harmless and inoffensive -- and void of malice. First Corinthians 14:20...."

"The child of a gentleman will play with the child of a beggar (Romans 12:16). The child in rags, if it have the breast, is well-enough pleased with [it] - and envies not the gaiety of the child in silk.... Their believing in Christ, though they be little ones, unites them to Him - so that, as they partake of the benefit of His sufferings, He also partakes in the wrong of theirs, and interests Him[self] in their cause...."

"Take heed that ye **despise not** one of these **little ones!** This is spoken to the **disciples**. As Christ will be displeased with the enemies of His Church if they wrong any of the Members of it, even the least - so He will be displeased with the great ones of the Church, if they despise the little ones...."

We may understand it literally of little children. Of them, Christ was speaking (v. 2-4).... This despising of the little ones, is what we are largely cautioned against. Romans 14:3-21...."

"We must not look upon these little ones as contemptible - because really, they are considerable. Let not Earth despise those whom Heaven respects! ... The little ones which believe in Christ are worthy to be respected. Consider...the ministration of the good angels about them! ' In Heaven [explains Jesus] their angels always behold the face of My Father' They are the **little ones angels** God' s angels are theirs. For all His are ours, if we be Christ' s. First Corinthians 3:22...."

"Every particular saint when there is occasion, has a guard of angels. This is particularly applied here - to the little ones.... The angels' continued felicity and honour...consists in the vision of God; [in] seeing Him...as He is.... The expression intimates, as some think, the special dignity and honour of the little ones' angels...(as if the strongest angels had the charge of the weakest saints).... They [God' s angels] beheld the face of God, expecting to receive orders from Him what to do for the good of the saints...."

"**The Son of man is come to save that which was lost....** The little ones' angels have...a charge concerning them, and attend upon them.... The ministration of angels is founded in the mediation of Christ.... They [the little ones] are not to be despised, because Christ came to save...the little ones that are lost" - or rather that **were** lost, before Christ came to save them.

"Christ' errand into the World was to save that which was lost.... The least and weakest believer should not be despised or offended. If Christ put such a value upon them - let us not undervalue them! ... Christ came into the World to save souls....

"He will reckon severely with those that obstruct and hinder...the progress of those [infants] that are setting their faces Heavenward." He will reckon severely with those adults who "so thwart His great design" -- by themselves ' adult-erously' downplaying or ignoring "the tender regard which our heavenly Father has to these little ones, and His concern for their welfare....

"**It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish.** More is implied than is expressed. It is not His will that any should perish..[but] that these little ones should be saved.... God is their Father, and is therefore inclined to succour them. A father takes care of all his children, but is particularly tender of the little ones. Genesis 33:13."

Wesleyan Semi-Arminianism on the salvation of early-dying infants

The most famous of all modified Arminians, John Wesley, insisted⁴⁰⁴ that "no man living is without some pre-vent-ing [or prevenient] grace.... There is a measure of free will supernaturally restored to every man, together with that supernatural light which enlightens every man that cometh into this World [John 1:9]....

"That, by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men (all born into the World) unto condemnation, is an undoubted truth -- and affects every infant as well as every adult person. But it is equally true that by the righteousness of One, the free gift came upon all men - all born into the World (infants and adults) - unto justification."

Rev. Dr. D.D. Whedon declared⁴⁰⁵ while discussing the views of the early modified-Arminian Methodists: "Wesley' s earlier expressions of opinion - indicated a holding of the churchly doctrine of baptismal regeneration in infancy. His later indications of opinion - indicate that he held all infants to be Members of the Kingdom of Heaven.... Fletcher maintained the doctrine both of infant justification and regeneration. Dr. Fisk held to infant justification."

Also the "Rock of Ages" Calvinist Toplady champions universal infant salvation

One of the Semi-Arminian Wesley' s most renowned antagonists⁴⁰⁶ was the indeed famous Calvinist Rev. A.H. Toplady - the very celebrated composer of the internationally-known and interdenominationally-beloved hymn *Rock of Ages*. Toplady, who stoutly opposed baptismal regenerationism, believed in the universal salvation of all dying in infancy (whether baptized or not). Indeed, Toplady did so - much more fervently and consistently than did Wesley.

Explained Toplady:⁴⁰⁷ "Christ died only for them that believe, or in whom faith is wrought. It follows that faith is an exceeding great and precious **gift**.... No objection can hence arise against the salvation of such as die in infancy, all of whom are undoubtedly saved.... The Holy Spirit is able to inspire the grace of virtual faith into those hearts (especially at the moment of dissolution)" alias the very time of their death.

"I am convinced that the souls of all departed infants whatever," added Toplady, "whether baptized or unbaptized - are with God in glory. And I think my belief warranted by an authority which cannot err. Matthew 18:14.... I believe that, in the decree of predestination to life, God hath included all whom He hath decreed to take away in infancy; and that the decree of reprobation has nothing to do with them."

Soon thereafter, Toplady was attacked - by the Wesleyan Sellon - for quoting Matthew 18:14 to prove the salvation of those dying as infants. Toplady then replied: "True, I did so. Let us review the text itself. ' It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.'

"Supposing this to be spoken of infants, literally so called, it certainly proves that all who die in that state are saved.... Consult verse 10, ' Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones! For I say unto you, that their angels (*i.e.*, as I understand it, the souls of such of them as die in infancy) - do always behold the face of My Father Who is in Heaven.'

"Now, I should imagine it impossible to the angels or souls of little children always to behold the face of God in Heaven - unless their souls were previously dislodged from their bodies by death. Consequently, according to my view of the passage" - and later that of also the very erudite American Presbyterian Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield⁴⁰⁸ - "our Lord in the fourteenth verse speaks of such little ones, and of such only, as actually die in infancy....

"With the help of Mr. Wesley' s irradiation" - Toplady now confronted Sellon. "Shew me," Toplady challenged him, "what becomes of departed infants upon the Arminian plan of conditional salvation, and election on good works foreseen!"

Thus, Toplady defeated Sellon. He did so, on a technical knockout - during the second round of their contest.

Newton, Beecher and Scott: all early-dying infants saved!

Rev. John Newton (1725-1807), the famous writer of the beloved hymn *Amazing Grace*, amazingly yet graciously wrote:⁴⁰⁹ "I cannot be sorry for the death of infants. How many storms do they escape! Nor can I doubt, in my private judgment, that they are included in the election of grace.

"Perhaps those who die in infancy [before and without baptism] are the exceeding great multitude of all people, nations and languages mentioned [at] Revelation 7:9 - in distinction from the visible body of professing believers who were marked on their foreheads [in baptism] and openly known to be the Lord' s [at Revelation 7:2-4]."

The famous American Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Lyman Beecher was first a Presbyterian and later a Congregationalist. In 1808, he exposed the duplicity of those who were then falsely alleging that Calvinists teach the damnation of some who die in infancy.

In his work *The Government of God Desirable*, Beecher declared:⁴¹⁰ "I have never seen nor heard of any book which contained such a sentiment - nor a man, Minister or Layman, who believed or taught it.... Calvinists as a body are as far from teaching the doctrine of infant damnation, as any of those who false accuse them."

Discussing the *Westminster Confession* 10:3 in a later critique of an objectionable book review, Dr. Lyman Beecher further declared:⁴¹¹ "The phrase 'elect infants' - which...the [hypercalvinistic] reviewer takes for granted implies that there are infants [dying in infancy] who are not elect -- implies no such thing.... This [famous] *Confession*, which represented the Calvinism of Old England and New -- and which expresses also the doctrinal opinions of the Church of Scotland and of the Presbyterian Church in the United States - teaches neither directly nor by implication that infants [dying in infancy] are damned."

In an 1818 writing on *The Articles of the Synod of Dordt*, the great Bible Commentator Thomas Scott stated:⁴¹² "The salvation of the offspring of believers dying in infancy, is here scripturally stated -- and not limited to such as are baptized.

Nothing is said of the children of unbelievers dying in infancy.... But why might not these Calvinists [of Dordt] have as favourable a hope of all infants dying before actual sin, as anti-Calvinists can have?"

Summary of the Post-Calvinian Church on infant salvation

In this chapter, we looked at the Post-Calvinian Church on the salvation of early-dying infants. We saw how the 'Early Protestant' Anglican Church viewed infant salvation. We noted that especially Becon and Hooper believed in the universal salvation of all dying in infancy, and that even Blunt and Hooker did not look unfavourably upon the salvation of the infants of heathen.

We then saw that the early Calvinist *Confessions* all at least imply the salvation of those dying in infancy. Rev. Dr. William Twisse, the Moderator of 1643f Westminster Assembly, reprehended the notion of infant damnation. The *Westminster Confession* 10:3 itself teaches that elect infants dying then, are first regenerated. Indeed, classic comments thereon - by David Dickson, Robert Dick, Robert Shaw, A.A. Hodge, J.B. Green, Philip Schaff, B.B. Warfield and Gordon H. Clark - all insist that this does not suggest any dying in infancy are lost, but in fact tends to imply that all so dying are saved.

This view seems to have been shared also by Puritans **contemporary** with Westminster - not just the above-mentioned David Dickson, but also Thomas Manton and John Owen. Thus, Manton said Hebrews 11:6 implies that also infants need to believe. Owen in turn not only taught that early-dying infants are justified by regeneration, but also repudiated the Arminian notion of a "faithless infants' salvation."

The maverick hypercalvinist Michael Wigglesworth, however, singularly alleged that the early-dying infants of unbelievers are lost forever. Yet against this - as also in the past - true Calvinists also from Doddridge onward continued to stress the salvation of at least many babies, and sometimes even of all dying in infancy.

Matthew Henry insisted not only that the infants of unbelievers were saved in Jonah three - but also that those in Jonah four who did not know the difference between their right hand from their left, were precisely such infants. Commenting on the Gospel of Matthew 18:1-14, Dr. Henry also seems to have held it is not God' s will that any infant should perish (namely everlastingly).

Semi-Arminians like John Wesley and Dr. D.D. Whedon stressed the salvation of early-dying infants. The famous Calvinist Augustus Toplady championed even universal infant salvation. Finally, also Rev. John Newton, Professor Lyman Beecher and Dr. Thomas Scott taught that all early-dying infants are saved.

IX. 19TH-CENTURY CHURCH ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this chapter, we shall look at the views of the Nineteenth-Century Church on the salvation of early-dying infants. First, we shall examine the tradition always held thereanent by Princeton Theological Seminary. Next, we shall look at the similar views of Rev. Drs. William Harris, David Russell, George Bethune, and J.H. Bockok.

We shall then turn to the writings anent infant salvation: of Rev. Professor Dr. Charles Hodge and his son Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge of the Northern Presbyterian Church; of Rev. Professor Dr. R.S. Candlish of the Free Church in Scotland; and of Rev. Professor Dr. R.L. Dabney of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Going back to the Northern Presbyterian Church, we shall then examine the similar views of Rev. Professor Dr. W.G.T. Shedd and Rev. Dr. H.J. van Dyke.

Next, we shall refer to the Dutch Reformed tradition regarding the salvation of those dying in infancy - as represented by Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Bavinck and Rev. Professor Dr. Abraham Kuyper Sr. Significantly, we shall find it substantially reflected also in the views of the American Southern Presbyterian Church' s Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Girardeau.

We shall then ask whether we should have any *Declaratory Statement* anent the *Westminster Confession*. We shall next go on to discuss the background of the *Victorian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement*; of the Australian Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Rentoul' s understanding of Calvin, Twisse, Turretine, Hodge and Candlish concerning the salvation of those dying in infancy; and we shall then present the *Victorian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement* thereanent.

Princeton always held to the salvation of all dying in infancy

North America' s formerly most famous Presbyterian ' Hall of Biblical Learning' - Princeton Theological Seminary - was established in 1812. Already its very first Professor, the great and highly-orthodox Rev. Professor Dr. Archibald Alexander (1772-1851) - held to the universal redemption through Christ' s blood of all dying as infants.

Explained Rev. Professor Archibald Alexander:⁴¹³ "As infants...are infected with original sin, they cannot without regeneration be qualified for the happiness of Heaven. Children dying in infancy must therefore be regenerated...."

"As the Holy Scriptures have not informed us that any of the human family departing in infancy will be lost, we are permitted to hope that all such will be saved." To Alexander, they all were.

Archibald Alexander was only the first in a long line of Princeton Theologians known to have upheld this position. In this, he was followed by the other Alexanders; by Ashbel Green; by the Hodges; by C.W. Shields; by the great B.B. Warfield; and also by many others.

Thus, Rev. Professor Dr. Ashbel Green soon gave a withering response to an accusation that the *Westminster Standards* affirm the damnation of infants - and certain other errors. "Need I assure you," retorted Green,⁴¹⁴ "that we reject every one of these revolting ideas - with as much sincerity as any of those who charge us with them."

Rev. Dr. William Harris: all that die in infancy are saved

In 1821, Rev. Dr. William Harris wrote his book *Grounds of Hope for the Salvation of All Dying in Infancy*. There, he discussed a number of Bible passages. One such is Jeremiah 2:34, where God rebukes the people of Jerusalem for shedding ' the blood of the souls of the poor innocents.' Harris declared⁴¹⁵ this "passage seems to refer to ' Him Who, because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, Himself likewise took part of the same - that, through His own death, He might destroy him that had the power of death,' " namely the devil (together with his demons). Hebrews 2:14.

Thus, Christ died also for ' the children' - held Harris. Christ did so, in order that He "through His own triumphs over the enemies of degraded man might prepare in our Father' s House [apartments alias] mansions for us - [and so] that where He is, we might abide for ever [as] participants of His own immortal felicity." Thus, also those leaving this earthly life as infants, shall inhabit those heavenly mansions or celestial apartments.

In Jeremiah 19:3-9, God further rebukes the people of Jerusalem with having ' filled this place with the blood of innocents.' Many expositors follow Dr. John Calvin anent these ' innocents' being the faithful infants of apostate covenant-breakers. Some, however, draw even further conclusions from this passage.

Thus also Harris. For here he comments:⁴¹⁶ "Can it be supposed that He Who undertook in such tremendous language to avenge their temporal injuries - was at the same time intending to destroy them for ever? [Can it be supposed] that He left those murdered babes an eternal prey to devils - in whose obscure and sanguinary orgies their innocent blood had been shed?" No way!

In Jeremiah 22:28-30, God proclaims Jeconiah and his seed to have been cast forth, declaring that he shall be ' childless' - and a man that shall not prosper in his days. For ' no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.' The comment of Harris on these verses, is indeed illuminating.

Dr. Harris explains⁴¹⁷ that "even mercy may require the infliction of a stroke so severe as the death of beloved infants. ' Write this man childless' - were...a decision greatly **favour** both of parents and children. To the wicked parent himself, it is a merciful dispensation that God permits him not to aggravate his dreadful responsibility - by training up his child for perdition."

Right here, Harris also gives an interesting comment on the statement in Hebrews 2:14f that Christ was incarnated as one of the children of men - precisely so that He might destroy the devil - ' and [so that He might] deliver them who...were all their lifetime subject to bondage.'

Christ, explains Harris - "because the children were partakers of flesh and blood - Himself likewise took part of the same."

The Saviour did so, continues Harris,⁴¹⁸ so that He - "through His Own triumphs over the enemies of degraded man - might prepare, in our Father' s House, ' mansions' for us." As a result, "where He is, we might [later] abide for ever - participants of His own immortal felicity."

Rev. Dr. David Russell: universal salvation of dying infants

In 1823, the Scottish Presbyterian Rev. Dr. David Russell published his *Essay on the Salvation of All Dying in Infancy*.⁴¹⁹ Later, in 1844, a second book appeared from his pen - his *Infant Salvation or an Attempt to Prove that All who Die in Infancy are Saved*.⁴²⁰

What, to Russell, does the word ' innocents' mean in the Holy Bible - when applied to infants? He indicates⁴²¹ that the word means those who, although inheriting and also themselves sharing in the guilt of **Adam** s very first sin, are nevertheless not yet old enough to have added thereto by way of their own actual alias act-ing sins.

"In regard therefore to actual transgression, the Scriptures call them ' innocents' and describe them as not knowing ' either good or evil' - and, of course, [as being] incapable of personal sin. Jeremiah 19:4; Numbers 14:31; Deuteronomy 1:39." See too Jonah 3:7f & 4:11.

In Isaiah 57:5, God rebukes the apostates among the Israelites for ' enflaming yourself with idols under every green tree - [and] slaying the children in the valleys under the clefts of the rocks.' Here, Dr. Russell observes:⁴²² "God has in several instances expressed His regard for children, irrespective of the piety of their parents - and even for the children of rebellious idolaters. As, for example, in Isaiah 57:5."

In Ezekiel 16:36, God rebukes the apostate Israelites for having shed ' the blood of thy children.' Indeed, God goes on to say those infants - unlike their wicked parents - were **His** children.

Here, Russell points out⁴²³ that God "calls the children His [cf. Ezekiel 16:20-21] - because in giving them to their parents He still retained His right to them. So that in [their] putting them to death, there was robbery as well as cruelty exercised. But the regard expressed for them, implies more than what arises simply from their being His property as Creator.

"It is allowed by Mr. Boston⁴²⁴ that ' These might be God' s children, as being heirs of God and the Kingdom of Heaven - though thus barbarously slain by their parents.' " By "Mr. Boston," Dr. Russell here means the well-known Rev. Thomas Boston of Ettrick.

As Rev. Dr. Russell continues: "The general principle that the infants of the ungodly may at death enter the Kingdom of Heaven, is distinctly admitted by him.... In his view, there is nothing in the thing itself that is inconsistent with Scripture." This is a powerful testimony. For it comes from Thomas Boston himself - a leading Calvinistic Puritan Presbyterian.

Rev. Drs. Bethune and Bockok on the salvation of early-dying infants

In 1846, Rev. Dr. George Bethune published his book *Early Lost, Early Saved: An Argument for the Salvation of Infants with Consolations for Bereaved Parents*. There, he declared⁴²⁵ that the Baal-worshippers "had shed the blood of many ' innocents' "viz. harmless infants. The latter, "therefore - because of their helpless innocency - [were] peculiarly objects of the divine care."

In 1857, Rev. Dr. J.H. Bockok published his *Presbyterian Pastor's Catechism*. There, he asked and answered (*inter alia*) a very important question on infant faith and infant baptism.

Asked Bockok:⁴²⁶ "Why do we not baptize the infant children of unbelievers?" In his answer, he gave two significant reasons.

"1. Not because we think such children would be lost if they died in infancy. We do not think children shall be saved on account of their baptism, but through the merits of Christ. Baptism does not confer salvation, but only acknowledges and recognizes it." Consequently, seeing baptism does not justify early-dying elect infants - they are obviously justified without and therefore often also before baptism.

"2. Non-elect infants are such as do not die in infancy, but grow up to be[come] wicked and impenitent men." Here - explained Bockok - one thinks of such apostates "as Cain, Herod, Judas, Voltaire, Paine." Those who die in infancy, concluded Bockok, are all elect.

Rev. Professor Dr. Charles Hodge on the salvation of all early-dying infants

According to Professor Philip Schaff,⁴²⁷ "Dr. [Charles] Hodge, the most orthodox Calvinistic divine of the age, very positively teaches...the salvation of all infants dying in infancy, and represents this as the ' common doctrine of evangelical Protestants' He supports his view by three arguments:

- 1) The analogy between Adam and Christ, Romans 5:18-19 - where we have no right to restrict the free gift of Christ upon all, more than the Bible itself restricts it;
- 2) Christ' s conduct toward children;
- 3) the general nature of God to bless and to save, rather than to curse and destroy."

Here are Dr. Charles Hodge' s own words:⁴²⁸ "All who die in infancy, are saved.... We have no right to put any limit on these general terms, except what the Bible itself places upon them. The Scriptures nowhere exclude any class of infants - baptized or unbaptized, born in Christian or in heathen lands, of believing or unbelieving parents - from the benefits of the redemption of Christ....

"Where sin abounded, grace has **much more** abounded [Romans 5:20].... The benefits of redemption far exceed the evils of the fall.... The number of the saved far exceeds the number of the lost....

"If the race fell in Adam, much more shall it be restored in Christ. If death reigned by one, much more shall grace reign by One. This ' much more' is repeated over and over. The Bible everywhere teaches that God delighteth not in the death of the wicked.... It is, therefore, contrary not only to the argument of the apostle, but to the whole spirit of the passage (Romans 5:12-21) to exclude infants from ' the all' who are made alive in Christ.

"The conduct and language of our Lord in reference to children, are not to be regarded as matters of sentiment.... He evidently looked upon them as the lambs of the flock for which, as the good Shepherd, He laid down His life....

Of such, He tells us, is the Kingdom of Heaven - as though Heaven was, in great measure, composed of the souls of redeemed infants. It is, therefore, the general belief of Protestants - contrary to the doctrines of Romanists and Romanizers - that all who die in infancy, are saved....

"We are sorry to see that [the Lutheran Theologian] Dr. Krauth labours to [try to] prove that the *Westminster Confession* [10:3] teaches that only a certain part, or some of those who die in infancy, are saved.... We can only say that we never saw a Calvinistic Theologian who held that doctrine....

"The number of the finally lost in comparison with the whole number of the saved, will be very inconsiderable. Our blessed Lord, when surrounded by the innumerable company of the redeemed, will be hailed as...the Lamb that bore the sins **of the world**." Indeed, this is the very way in which Hodge' s famous *Systematic Theology* actually **closes!**

Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge: all early-dying infants are saved

Charles Hodge' s views on infant salvation were stated also by his almost equally-famous son, Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge. According to Schaff,⁴²⁹ "the interpretation of Dr. A.A. Hodge...in his commentary [on the *Confession of Faith* (10:3)]...is fairly admissible.... He agrees, as to the salvation of **all** infants dying in infancy, with his father."

Declares A.A. Hodge himself:⁴³⁰ "We have good reason to believe that **all** infants [dying such,] are elected. The *Confession* [10:3] adheres in this place accurately to the facts revealed.... It is not positively revealed that all [early-dying] infants are elect, but we are left for many reasons to indulge a highly-probable hope that such is the fact."

Elsewhere, Rev. Prof. Dr. Archibald Alexander Hodge added that "the whole body of those dying in infancy outside of the Visible Church...constitute the vast majority of the Essential [or Invisible] Church.... The multitude of the redeemed will be incomparably greater than the number of the lost.

"My father, at the close of his long life spent in the defense of Calvinism, wrote...a little while before he died: ' I am fully persuaded that the vast majority of the human race will share in the beatitudes and glories of our Lord' s redemption.... All who die [during their infancy] before complete moral agency, have been given to Christ."

Rev. Professor Dr. R.S. Candlish: all early-dying infants are elect

The ' infant salvation' views of Rev. Professors Drs. Charles and A.A. Hodge of the Northern Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), were shared by Rev. Professor Dr. R.S. Candlish of the Free Church in Scotland. Candlish' s views hereanent were upheld *inter alios* also by Rev. Professor Dr. L. ("Fightin' Larry") Rentoul of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in Australia.

According to the approving Rentoul - about whom later⁴³¹ - Professor Candlish held that, "on account of the atonement, the salvation of dying infants is sure."

For, in his work on *The Atonement*, Candlish himself insisted:⁴³² "It may be inferred **from Scripture** that all dying in infancy are elect, and are therefore saved.... The whole analogy of the plan of saving mercy, seems to favour the same view....

It may be seen to be put beyond question - by the bare fact that little children die.... The death of **little children** [or rather their salvation before they die] - must be held to be one of the fruits of **redemption**."

Rev. Professor Dr. R.L. Dabney on the salvation of those dying in infancy

These lofty views were shared also by leaders of the Southern Presbyterian Church in North America (PCUS). This is seen, for example, from the great Rev. Professor Dr. R.L. Dabney' s treatise *Endless Punishment* - in which he repudiated the unorthodox universalism of the liberal Anglican, Canon Farrar.

In Rev. Canon F.W. Farrar' s heterodox sermons, explains Dabney⁴³³ "the orthodox doctrine is uniformly painted as including the everlasting damnation of a majority of the human family, immensely larger than the number of the saved. If Canon Farrar knew enough to entitle him to preach on this subject, he ought to have known that all the orthodox believe just the opposite!

"Although [on certain rare occasions] at some evil time or place the [adult] reprobate may outnumber the saved, they [the orthodox] hold that by virtue of the redemption of the infants dying in infancy (nearly half the race) and of the teeming [post]millennial generations, the major part of the race will ultimately be gathered into Heaven.... Mercy shall boast itself against judgment!" James 2:13.

Elsewhere, Professor Dabney continues: "God' s election is everywhere represented in Scripture as an act of mercy.... Everywhere, it is sin which is excluded from His favour - and sin alone.... The expiation of Christ for sin - expiation of infinite value and universal fitness - should be held forth to the whole World.... God here exhibits a provision which is so related to the sin of the race, that by it all those obstacles to every sinner' s return to His love, which his guilt and the Law presents, are ready to be taken out of the way."

Rev. Professor Dr. W.G.T. Shedd on infant salvation

Important too is the work *Calvinism: Pure and Mixed* - and all of the various volumes on *Dogmatic Theology* - by Rev. Professor Dr. W.G.T. Shedd of Union Theological Seminary in New York City. "Regeneration is a work of God in the human soul," declares Shedd.⁴³⁴ He continues: "This fact places the infant and the adult upon the same footing, and makes infant regeneration [just] as possible as that of adults...."

"Infants consequently...need the divine clemency.... The 'salvation' of infants supposes their prior damnation.

Whoever asserts that an infant is 'saved' - by implication concedes that it is [or rather was] lost.... It **cannot** be said that God would treat an infant unjustly - **if** He did not offer him salvation" in the **intermediate** state after death before judgment day (which He does **not**).

Why, then, could this not be said? Because "upon the supposition (now common in the evangelical churches) that all infants dying in infancy, being elect, are 'regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit Who worketh [in **this present** life] when and where and how He pleaseth' *Westminster Confession* X:3) -- there is no need of any such offer...."

"Owen (*Arminianism* chapter VII) teaches the salvation of some infants outside of the covenant and the church.... Toplady, one of the highest Calvinists..., remarks...respecting the salvation of all infants dying in infancy...that the souls of all departed infants whatever...are with God in glory.... Alexander remarks on...'any of the human family departing in infancy...[that] we are permitted to hope that all such will be saved.' "

Rev. Dr. H.J. van Dyke & Rev. Professor Dr. H. Bavinck on infant salvation

Rev. Dr. Henry J. van Dyke, a Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., expressed his views during 1885 in *The Presbyterian Review*. There he wrote:⁴³⁵ "The multitude of the redeemed which no man can number [Revelation 7:9], will include...all who die in infancy." This includes even all those who died before they might ever have been able to have received infant baptism [Revelation 7:2-8 cf. 7:9-14f].

The great Dutch Calvinist Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Bavinck later wrote⁴³⁶ about historic American Presbyterianism that even in "the 'Old School' ...Hodge and Shedd...again agreed.... They take election to be very broad, and include thereunder all early-dying infants."

Significantly, Bavinck also recalled⁴³⁷ the somewhat similar views: of the 1566 *Second Swiss Confession* [chapter I]; of Junius; of Voetius; and of the *Westminster Standards* [namely of the Confession 10:3 and the *Larger Catechism* 68f & 191]. Bavinck himself then concluded: "In connection with the salvation of...the early-dying infants of the heathen...we refrain from a definite and certain judgment either positively or negatively...."

"As regards these serious questions, Reformed Theology is in a much more favourable position than any other.... The Reformed never desired to determine the measure of grace

whereby one could remain connected to God even under many errors and sins - nor establish the degree of knowledge indispensably necessary for salvation. Again, they have maintained that the means of grace are not absolutely essential for salvation.... Even if many may lapse - howsoever disturbing - the congregation, humanity, the **World** is preserved in Christ."

Rev. Professor Dr. A. Kuiper Sr. on infant salvation

That other great Dutch Calvinist, Rev. Professor Dr. Abraham Kuiper Sr., was far more interested in the presupposed regeneratedness of covenant infants - than in the status before God of the babies of unbelievers. Yet even Abraham Kuiper on at least one occasion warned Christians to be very cautious also as to the latter.

Professor Dr. Abraham Kuiper is also well-known for his views about the 'presumed regeneration' of elect infants. Indeed, he also presupposed their subsequent 'slumbering rebirth' for many years (until that presumed regeneration would hopefully be awakened by their conversion sometimes only decades later).

These views did not originate with Kuiper. They were derived by him from earlier Classic Calvinists like Rev. Professor Dr. Gysbrecht Voetius, Rev. Professor Dr. Peter á Mastricht, Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Witsius, and others. These views seem equally applicable - *mutatis mutandis* - to the babies of both believers and unbelievers.

Explained Kuiper:⁴³⁸ "Our fathers, and especially Calvin, more than once pointed out that one should be careful with one's judgments. For the Lord God may have His elect even among those who are apparently rascals and thugs.... God's almighty power can raise up children for Abraham even from rocks.... Those whom He has elected, He also brings to salvation - and to salvation in no other way than by way of Christ....

"God so loved the **World**.... The Mediator is called 'The Light **of the World**' The Lamb of God 'takes away the sins **of the World**.' Christ is named 'the Saviour **of the World**' [John 4:42].... 'The fall of Israel,' says Paul, 'is the riches **of the World**' (Romans 11:12); and its rejection, 'the reconciliation **of the World**.' Accordingly, Christ is a propitiation 'not for our sins only, but for the sins of the **whole World**.' And the final triumphant cry at the return of the Lord, is to be: 'Now the kingdoms **of the World** have become that of our God'

"God has **not** deserted the work of His hands. He has **not** abandoned His magnificent creation - has **not** permitted our race to fall away into the hell of destruction.... If we liken mankind thus, as it has grown up out of Adam, to a tree - then the elect are not leaves which have been plucked off of this tree in order that there may be braided from them a laurel-wreath for God's glory - while the tree itself is to be cut down, uprooted, and cast into the fire.... Precisely the contrary! The lost are the boughs, twigs and leaves that have fallen away from the trunk of mankind - while the elect alone remain attached to it.

"The trunk, the tree, the race abides - and what is lost, is broken off from the trunk and loses its organic nature.... Thus the elect come forward not as twigs and branches that have been broken off, but precisely as those that have been kept on. The recreated **World**, is **theirs!**"

In 1890, Kuyper further declared⁴³⁹ that "the Reformed Confession does not pass judgment on the children of heathen who die before coming to years of discretion. They depend on God's mercy, widened as broadly as possible."

In his work *On the Sacraments*, Kuyper further declares that "if one goes to China and Japan, and one sees that all conditions are lacking to develop the divine seed of life in that environment - one there has to deny a work of God with all who have reached a riper age. Yet the possibility that the term of new life could be implanted there in children who die young, must be maintained by us."

Until the advent of modern medicine and the drastic reduction of the infant mortality rate especially at the commencement of the twentieth century, probably most of those who ever lived - died precisely as infants. Indeed, when it is remembered that even as late as World War II less than a quarter of those born in what were then 'third-world' countries ever survived till adulthood - the need of reflecting about early-age regeneratability, becomes obvious.

The alternative would almost certainly require one to conclude that Satan will ultimately have more human followers in Hell than will Jesus in Heaven. Not just Karl Barth but also many of those far more orthodox than he, however, regard this as 'ethically absurd' (if not also as an 'ontic impossibility').

Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Girardeau: all early-dying infants are saved

In 1890, Rev. Professor Dr. John L. Girardeau, the famous Presbyterian Lecturer at South Carolina's Columbia Theological Seminary, published his great book *Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism Compared as to Election, Reprobation, Justification, and Related Doctrines*. In that famous work, he stated:⁴⁴⁰ "God ordains none to wrath or punishment, except on account of their [very own] sin." Then he also asked: "What is the bearing of the Calvinistic doctrine, touching the decree of election and reprobation, upon the case of infants dying in infancy?"

Answering his own question, Girardeau then replied: "There have been very few Calvinists who have taken the ground that any infants dying in infancy are excluded from salvation - so few, as to exercise no influence upon the Calvinistic system.... **No** class [of Calvinists] affirms the certain or probable reprobation of any infants dying in infancy. The question, therefore, of the justice of their reprobation, is groundless - since neither the certainty nor the probability of their reprobation is asserted by any class of Calvinists.

"But does not the *Westminster Confession* [10:3] say that only elect infants are saved? No, it does not. The qualifying term **only** is not used. These are the [famous] words: 'Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth' The framers of the *Confession* evidently meant to imply that...no infants dying in infancy can be saved, except in consequence of election [from all eternity past and subsequently regeneration in time and since their conception].... The question whether all infants dying in infancy are elect and therefore are saved, is one which the *Confession* did not undertake to decide....

"If the ground be taken that **justice** requires the salvation of all infants dying in infancy - [**that,**] Calvinists unanimously deny.... If it be maintained that all infants dying in infancy are saved through the **mercy** of God applying to them the justifying blood of Christ and communicating the regenerating grace of the Spirit - [**that,**] speaking for myself, I do not deny. I think it probable....

"He decrees to condemn men for not coming - not to debar them from coming.... God exercises no positive influence upon the minds of any sinners to deter them from coming to Christ for salvation."

All pressures to revise chapter 10:3 of the *Westminster Confession*, should therefore strenuously be resisted. For, as Rev. Professor Dr. T.C. Johnson of Union Seminary in Virginia has pointed out,⁴⁴¹ the so-called 'learned' have not made war solely on this statement anent infants - but rather on the doctrine of election as such (which is taught **elsewhere** too in the *Confession*).

Should we ever have any Declaratory Statement anent the Confession?

Resisting revision of all or even any part of the famous *Westminster Standards* does not necessarily mean that declaratory statements thereanent should be taboo. For some such declaratory statements may be wholesome.

After all, even immediately after the very construction of the *Confession of Faith* itself, no less a body than the 1647 General Assembly of the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland issued⁴⁴² a useful *Declaratory Act*. It did so, anent its own restrictive understanding of certain passages in the *Westminster Confession* (31:2 & 31:5).

Indeed, also the phrase 'sanctified in Christ' in the historic 1581 Dutch Reformed *Baptismal Formula* - required later clarifications. These latter were given, by way of the *Reformed Declaratory Statement* thereanent issued at the 1905 Synod of Utrecht - and then again by the further *Reformed Declaratory Statement* thereanent issued at the 1944f Synod of Zwolle.

The background of the 1882 Victorian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement

One such helpful *Declaratory Act*, was that of the 1882 (Australian) Presbyterian Church of Victoria. It was drawn up to counter the heresies of the Scottish migrant Rev. Dr. Charles Strong - and Elder J.C. Stewart of Melbourne.

It is very significant that ever since its inauguration in 1866, the Victorian Theological Hall had been using Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge's *Outlines of Theology*. Not till 1885 was that superseded there - and indeed only by the more comprehensive yet similar *Systematic Theology* of his father, Rev. Professor Dr. Charles Hodge.⁴⁴³

In a remarkable way, the theology of both of these Hodges was upheld in the Victorian ecclesiastical courts. This was so, especially as it related to the universal salvation of all

dying in infancy. Indeed, this fact was to influence also the Victorian *Declaratory Act* (and thereafter also the all-Australian *Declaratory Statement* of 1901).

Elder J.C. Stewart, the unitarianizing Dr. Charles Strong' s lackey, publically proclaimed⁴⁴⁴ in 1881 that "in the *Confession of Faith*...it stated...that there are elect and non-elect, and that...there is such a thing as the eternal damnation of infants who had never lisped." Consequently, concluded Stewart, "the men who pretend to assert...and defend all the doctrine contained in the *Confession*, are dishonest men."

The conservative Gaelic-Australian Rev. D.S. McEachran - a leader in his presbytery - then immediately responded in the *Argus* newspaper that "the aim of the *Confession* is to show that, if infants are saved, they owe their salvation to the free electing love of God. But anyone is at liberty to believe that all children dying in infancy have been elected.... And Presbyterians all the World over believe that."

The leading modern Australian Presbyterian Historian Rev. Dr. Rowland S. Ward (of the ' Free Church' alias the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia) - though not himself a member of either the Presbyterian Church of Victoria nor of the Presbyterian Church of Australia - has stated the situation correctly. Observes Dr. Ward: "McEachran' s approach was fully in line with full commitment to the doctrines of the *Confession*."

Rev. Dr. Charles Strong then defended his Elder J.C. Stewart. Subsequently, Strong was censured by the Presbytery of Melbourne. Thereafter, Strong returned to Britain.

Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Rentoul: all dying in infancy are saved

At that September 1881 meeting of Melbourne Presbytery, Rev. Professor Dr. J. Lawrence ("Fighting Larry") Rentoul of the Theological Hall of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria stated⁴⁴⁵ that "Mr. Stewart has used the horrible words - ' In the *Confession* there is such a thing as the eternal damnation of infant babies who have never lisped' He tells us it follows ' as a logical and necessary inference' from the whole Calvinistic system."

Continued Rentoul: "That is...awful falsehood! The very opposite is the fact. For it is an inherent principle of Calvinism that every one shall be judged according to his works [cf. Revelation 20:13]. But infants are taken away before works - and are saved.

"Mr. Stewart [Rev. Dr. Strong' s representative Elder] says, ' No sound Calvinist will maintain that every heathen child who dies in infancy, will be saved.' Well then - Dr. [R.S.] Candlish and Dr. [A.A.] Hodge were not sound Calvinists [on Stewart s false assumptions]! For they maintained it....

"If Mr. Stewart had read into history for the reason why that phrase ' elect infants' was used - he would never have uttered the awful language of his speech. Canon [F.W.] Farrar -- who is a bitter foe to Calvinism - confesses that until the Reformation ' the entire mediaeval Church held the doctrine of the damnation of infants dying unbaptized.' And he quotes Dante' s *Inferno*....

"Who broke for ever, out of Christendom, that awful doctrine? It was Calvin and Calvinism. They get so much vulgar abuse. Let us at least be just to them!

Calvin and the Presbyterian Reformers said what at least they, and Scripture, warrant for - that all the elect are saved. And under that blessed name, all dying infants, in heathen lands or Christian, are gathered safe in Christ. That is our *Confession* doctrine -- if a man can read right the story of the times that formed its careful phraseology."

Dr. Rentoul and Dr. Calvin on the salvation of those dying in infancy

Professor Dr. Rentoul then continued: "Here is Calvin' s grand language - in...the *Institutes*. Calvin is battling with two parties - the Romanists and Ritualists on the one hand, and Anabaptists on the other. The Anabaptist view (says Calvin) that children are **only** to be regarded as [the **fallen**] Adam' s sons, ' is directly opposed to the truth of God *Institutes* IV:16:17]. He goes on [*Institutes* IV:16:26], ' This plainly explodes the fiction of those who consign all the unbaptized to eternal death....

" If (says Calvin) baptism be necessary to salvation, then they [the Anabaptists] that have withheld baptism from infants - have consigned them to eternal death. Let them now consider what kind of agreement that has with the words of Christ, ' Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven!' "

Then - adds Rentoul - Calvin "goes on to say, ' Every one whom Christ blesses, is exempted from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God.' But ' infants are blessed by Him; therefore it follows that they are freed from death.' Such are the glorious words over three hundred years ago of John Calvin [*Institutes* IV:16:31]....

"Mr. Stewart says, ' The other phrase [in the *Confession*] - "others not elected" - includes non-elect infants.' But I [Rentoul] answer it is absolutely certain it does nothing of the kind! For the proof from the New Testament set down in the *Confession* for that expression ' others not elected' is...the very proof that the Anabaptists had urged against Calvin (the expression found in John 3:36 & First John 5:12) - viz. that ' they who believe not in the Son or have not the Son, have not life.'

"But Calvin [in *Institutes* 4:16:31] grandly answers, ' Scripture does not there speak of the general guilt of Adam' s posterity but only of those who spurn the grace offered to them. **But this** (he adds) **has nothing to do with infants!**' "

The *Westminster Confession* 10:3-4 states: ' Elec**infants**, dying in infancy, are regenerated' etc. The phrase that follows this, then speaks of ' other**not** elected.'

Hence, as Professor Rentoul here rightly explained: "Our *Confession* - in **appending**...the phrase '**others** not elected' - proves that **it** has **nothing** to do with **infants**. All infants that die [such], are elect and safe.... Dr. Twisse - head of the *Westminster Assembly* - said, ' God will condemn all such as finally persevere in sin.' But infants have done no sin; therefore they will not be condemned.

"Turretine, regarding infants universally, says, ' Christian love commands us to hope well for their salvation.' Dr. Hodge says, ' All infants that die in infancy are elected.' Dr. Candlish says: ' On account of the atonement, the salvation of dying infants is sure. All dying in infancy are elect, and therefore saved.'

"These are the great Calvinist Theologians. Yet Mr. Stewart, not content with misrepresenting horribly our Church' s creed, affirms now that no sound Calvinist would maintain that every heathen child who dies in infancy, is saved....

"If Mr. Stewart [at the time he assented to be ordained as an Elder] believed that our *Confession* teaches all these awful things - why did he, how could he, sign it? ... He signed that - [apparently, it would seem,] believing it taught all those things. Sooner than sign it, had I [at that time] believed that [which Stewart **later** stated] - I would have burnt off my right hand in the fire!"

The 1882 Declaratory Statement of the Victorian Presbyterian Church

The above turmoil was wisely countered by the following enactment of the 1882 *Victorian Declaratory Act*. That, in part, reads as follows:⁴⁴⁶

"Questions have been raised as to...the salvation of children dying in infancy.... Whereas it is desirable...to declare the sense in which the Church understands these statements -- the General Assembly resolves to declare...that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.... He has provided a salvation sufficient for all, adapted to all, and offered to all in the Gospel.... None are saved, except through the mediation of Christ and by the grace of the Holy Spirit Who worketh where and when and how it pleases Him....

In **accepting** the *Standards* [and in particular the *Westminster Confession* 10:3], it is not required to be held that **any** who die in infancy are lost." Thus the salvation of those that die during their infancy, rests where it has always been - *viz.* in the electing work of Almighty God in Christ, from all eternity.

Summary of the Nineteenth-Century Church on infant salvation

In this chapter, we first saw that American Presbyterianism' s prestigious Princeton Theological Seminary from the time of its first Professor onward (Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander) - had always held to the salvation of all dying in infancy. Indeed, also Rev. Dr. William Harris wrote that all who die in infancy are saved - as too did Rev. Drs. David Russell, George Bethune, and J.H. Bockok.

Rev. Professors Dr. Charles Hodge and A.A. Hodge insisted that all early-dying infants are saved. So too did Rev. Professors Dr. R.S. Candlish, Robert L. Dabney and W.G.T. Shedd. Indeed, not unfavourable views thereanent were offered also by Theologians such as: Rev. Dr. H.J. van Dyke; Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Bavinck Sr.; Rev. Professor Dr. Abraham Kuyper Sr.; and Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Girardeau.

After seeing the great usefulness of having a *Declaratory Statement* especially on the status of dying infants in the *Westminster Confession*, we canvassed the background of the very conservative *Victorian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement*. In the debates which led up to its formulation, we noted that Australia' s Rev. Professor Dr. J.L. Rentoul maintained (after citing Calvin & Twisse & Turretine & Candlish & Hodge) that all dying in infancy are saved.

Finally, we looked at the text of the *Declaratory Statement* itself of the Victorian Presbyterian Church. We noted its conclusion that "in **accepting** the [*Westminster*] *Standards*, it is not required to be held that **any** who die in infancy are lost."

X. 20TH-CENTURY CHURCH ON SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this chapter, we shall look at the Twentieth-Century Church on the salvation of early-dying infants. On this matter, we shall first examine the 1901 *Declaratory Statement of Presbyterian Church of Australia*. Next, we shall look at the very different claim of the 1903 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*

We shall then turn to the consistent views on infant salvation of some Presbyterians - namely: Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield; Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green Fairchild; Rev. Dr. David M' Conoughty; Rev. W.E. Schenck; and Rev. Professor Dr. R.A. Webb. Thereafter, we shall note the inconsistent views on this subject of a few modern Baptists - such as: Rev. Norman Fox; Rev. Professor Dr. Alvah Hovey; and Rev. Professor Dr. Augustus H. Strong.

We then note the views of some twentieth-century Reformed Theologians on the subject of infant salvation. Such will include: Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff; Rev. Dr. John W. Stagg; Rev. Luther Link; Rev. Dr. Samuel G. Craig; Professor Dr. Loraine Boettner; Rev. Professor Dr. L.B. Schenck; Rev. Dr. D.J. De Groot; and Rev. Professor Dr. J. Oliver Buswell.

Next, we shall note the impressions of certain modern Baptists such as Rev. David Kingdon that all dying babies seem unregenerate. Then finally, we shall note the very different 1992 views on infant salvation - of the Australian Presbyterians Rev. Dr. Rowland S. Ward and Rev. Professor Dr. T.L. Wilkinson.

The 1901 Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia

The year 1901 saw the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia. It was federated from the several States of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.

The same year also saw the coming into existence of the Presbyterian Church of Australia - confederated from the various Presbyterian Churches in the several Australian Colonies which then became States. Therewith, the previously-mentioned portions of the 1882 *Victorian Declaratory Act* were refined - into the almost identical words of the *Declaratory Act of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*.

Declares the latter act:⁴⁴⁷ "The doctrine of God' s eternal decrees, including the doctrine of election to eternal life, is held as defined in the *Confession of Faith*, Chapter III, Section I.... God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance [Second Peter 3:9].... He has provided a salvation sufficient for all, and adapted to all, and offered to all in the Gospel....

"None are saved, except through the mediation of Christ and by the grace of the Holy Spirit Who worketh where and when and how it pleases Him.... In accepting the *Subordinate*

Standard [namely the *Westminster Confession of Faith*], it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost."

The above was, of course, the earlier testimony also of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria during the nineteenth century. Thereafter, at the 1901 creation of the Presbyterian Church within Australia as such, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria was confederated - together with the Non-Victorian Presbyterian Churches in the other various States ' Down Under' - into the then-new Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Since that time, the above has become the testimony also of that thus-confederated denomination. Indeed this is the situation quite throughout the Continent of Australia.

The remarks about the above testimony made by a leader in a different denomination, are extremely significant. We refer to those of the leading Australian Presbyterian Historian Rev. Dr. R.S. Ward (of the rather conservative ' Free Church of Australia' or P.C.E.A.).

The above, states Ward,⁴⁴⁸ "may be considered as...an assertion of certain truths - with a view to repudiating the fatalistic construction of J.C. Stewart and others.... The end result might be regarded as...in fact valuable.... It is also allowed that one is not bound to believe that any who die in infancy are lost, and the background in J.C. Stewart' s remarks is evident."

From the above, it is clear that the 1901 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia* reasserts the predestinarian doctrines of chapter III of the *Westminster Confession*. Thus there is freedom in the P.C.A. to believe in, and also the preach, either the salvation of all or alternatively the salvation of only some dying as infants. However, there is no ability to require that also others in the P.C.A. must so believe or teach.

For the *P.C.A. Declaratory Statement* insists that "the doctrine of God' s eternal decree, including the doctrine of election to eternal life, is held as defined in the *Confession of Faith*, Chapter III, Section I.... In accepting the *Subordinate Standard* namely the *Westminster Confession of Faith*], it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost."

The 1903 Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church USA

Very different to the 1901 *Australian Declaratory Statement*, however, is the subsequent 1903 North American *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*. There, we find⁴⁴⁹ the ' authoritarian' twisting of chapter III of the *Confession* - and an apparent prohibition against teaching the damnation of any dying in infancy.

Here is the American text: "The [United] Presbyterian Church in the United States of America does authoritatively declare...with reference to Chapter III of the *Confession of Faith* that...God' s eternal decree is held in harmony with the doctrine of His love to all mankind." Further, the 1903 *Statement* pontificates, "Chapter X Section 3 of the *Confession of Faith*...is not to be regarded as teaching that any who die in infancy are lost. We believe that all dying in infancy...are regenerated...."

Rev. Dr. Samuel G. Craig, the former Editor of *Christianity Today*, was himself a Minister in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. As he rightly remarked:⁴⁵⁰ "It is obvious that the [1903] *Declaratory Statement* [of the PCUSA] goes **beyond** the teaching of Chapter X Section 3 of the *Confession of Faith* - inasmuch as it states positively that all who die in infancy, are saved."

It is important to remember that Craig himself asserted the salvation of all dying in infancy. So too did his famous colleague, the great Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield. Yet, like Craig, Warfield too considered that this above-mentioned 1903 *Declaratory Statement* formulation by his own PCUSA - claims more than can be proven.

Against it, Dr. Warfield - with some tact - objected: "The statement of the *Confession of Faith* that is dealt with, has nothing to do with the question of how many of those that die in infancy are saved.... The [1903 PCUSA] *Declaratory Statement* might well have contented itself with saying so.... [However,] it proceeds to enunciate a positive doctrine of the salvation of all that die in infancy.

"For ourselves, we must...confess inability to share the view of the implication of Chapter X.3 which would be involved in this. To us, the confessional statement in question appears to confine itself strictly to the way in which dying infants are saved, without any implication whatever as to the number of them that are saved.

"We must look upon the enunciation of the doctrine of the salvation of all infants dying such, therefore, as - in a strict ordering - out of place in this *Declaratory Statement*" of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Thus Warfield.

Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield: salvation for all dying in infancy

It is to Rev. Professor Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, then, that we now turn. Most fully, he has set out his views hereanent in his important study titled *The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation*.

There, Dr. Warfield insists that dying "infants too are included in the election of grace.... Today, few Calvinists can be found who do not hold with Toplady and Doddridge, and Thomas Scott and John Newton, and James P. Wilson and Nathan L. Rice and Robert J. Breckinridge, and Robert S. Candlish and Charles Hodge, and the whole body of those of recent years whom Calvinistic Churches delight to honor - that all who die in infancy are the children of God and enter at once into His glory."

Why? Professor Warfield explains: "Not because original sin is not deserving of eternal punishment (for all are born children of wrath); not because they are less guilty than others (for relative innocence would merit only relatively light punishment). Nor because they die in infancy (for that they die in infancy is not the cause but the effect of God' s mercy toward them). But simply because God in His infinite love has chosen them in Christ, before the foundation of the World, by a loving foreordination of them unto adoption as sons in Jesus Christ."⁴⁵¹

Also the noted Presbyterian Theologian Rev. Dr. Samuel G. Craig, when Editor of *Christianity Today*, later commented on Warfield' s above doctrine of universal salvation for all dying in infancy. According to Samuel Craig:⁴⁵² "Warfield held...that the saving grace of God includes all those dying in infancy, whether they be the offspring of believers or unbelievers....

"One of the most valuable of his [Warfield' s] historical studies, is entitled *The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation*." It is "an exhaustive study of the various views that have been held from patristic to modern times concerning the fate of those dying in infancy."

Professor Dr. Warfield there states⁴⁵³ about all those dying in infancy that "their destiny is determined...by an unconditional decree of God..., by an unconditional application of the grace of Christ to their souls through the immediate and irresistible operation of the Holy Spirit.... Death in infancy does [of course] depend on God' s providence. It is assuredly God in His providence Who selects this vast multitude to be made participants of His unconditional salvation....

"This is but to say that they are unconditionally predestinated to salvation from the foundation of the World.... [Thus,] the whole Arminian principle is traversed. If all infants dying such are saved -- not only the majority of the saved but doubtless the majority of the human race hitherto, have entered into life by a Non-Arminian pathway....

"If all that die in infancy are saved - it can only be through the almighty operation of the Holy Spirit Who works when and where and how He pleases, through Whose ineffable grace the Father gathers these little ones to the home He has prepared for them. If, then, the salvation of all that die in infancy be held to be a certain or probable fact - this fact will powerfully react on the whole complex of our theological conceptions....

"No system of theological thought can live, in which it cannot find a natural and logical place. It can find such a place in Reformed Theology. It can find such a place in no other system of theological thought."

Warfield: all dying in infancy were elected unto everlasting life

In his article titled *Predestination*, Rev. Professor Dr. Warfield declares⁴⁵⁴ (*obiter*) that "those that are left in their sins perish most deservedly - as the justice of God demands.... The Father of spirits [alias the God Who predestinates] has not distributed his elective grace with niggard[ly] hand, but from the beginning has had in view the restoration to Himself of the whole World....

"The Biblical writers bid us raise our eyes.... **From** the relatively **insignificant** body of the **lost**," explains Dr. Warfield, "the **prunings** [are] gathered beneath the branches of the [**cultivated**] olive-tree planted by the Lord' s own hand to fix them [the many prunings from the body of the **wild** or the lost], on the thrifty stock [of the **good** alias the cultivated tree] itself - and [upon] the crown of luxuriant leafage and (ever more richly) ripening fruit....

"Under the loving pruning [from fallen humanity] and grafting of the great Husbandman, it [the good tree] grows and flourishes and puts forth its boughs - until it shades the whole Earth [cf. Ezekiel 17 with Romans 11]. This, according to the Biblical writers, is the end of election; and this is nothing other than the salvation of the World.... The goal of a saved World shall at the end be gloriously realized!"

Elsewhere, he considers specifically the statement in the *Westminster Confession* 10:3 -- that 'elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit.' Here, Warfield explains,⁴⁵⁵ "the particular false inference which it has been most common for adversaries to draw from the statement...is that according to it some infants dying in infancy are lost."

To this, Warfield himself then retorts: "We believe that all dying in infancy are included in the election of grace.... It is a doctrine to which the Calvinistic system (and...the Calvinistic system alone) is logically altogether hospitable - and which has always been believed by some of the best of Calvinists, and for the last hundred years by practically all Calvinists."

In his article *Children*, Dr. Warfield further insists⁴⁵⁶ that "Jesus...asserted for children a recognized place in His Kingdom.... What is particularly to be born in mind with respect to the blessing of the little children - Matthew 19:12-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17 - is that these 'little children'*païdia*, Matthew 19:13f & Mark 10:13f & Luke 18:15) were distinctively 'babies'*brēphee*, Luke 18:15)....

"Taking them in His arms and fervently invoking a blessing upon them (Mark 10:16, *kateulogei*), He not only asserted for them a part in His mission - but even constituted them the type of the children of the Kingdom. 'Let the little children come unto Me!' - He says. 'Forbid them not! For of such is the Kingdom of God'

"Similarly, as the end approached and the children (*paides*) in the temple were greeting Him with hosannas, He met the indignant challenge of the Jews with the words of the psalmist: 'Ye, did ye never read, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained praise?"' Matthew 21:16."

Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green Fairchild: dying infants are elect

Are Infants Elected? That is the title of a work *inter alia* on the salvation of those dying in infancy, written by the Presbyterian Theologian Rev. Dr. Ashbel G. Fairchild. There, Fairchild refers⁴⁵⁷ to Rev. Dr. George W. Bethune's earlier study titled *Early Lost, Early Saved* - on the salvation of early-dying infants.

In the opinion of Dr. Fairchild, Bethune is "an excellent writer" - especially where "commenting on the nineteenth [chapter] of Jeremiah." That very important passage concerns the apostates' slaughter of their own 'innocent' children.

Fairchild further explains: "The author [Rev. Dr. George W. Bethune] here adopts the opinion of some very able commentators.... He is aware that others refer the 'innocent blood' also to

the martyrdom of prophets and other just[ified] persons. Still, the sacrificed children [also] are included - and the inference is strengthened by the babes being put in the same category with holy men."

Rev. Dr. Fairchild here follows the interpretations of Dr. John Calvin and Dr. Matthew Henry. Indeed, Fairchild himself makes another valuable remark about God' s mercy toward all the Ninevites - in the passage Jonah 4:10-11. "What we are particularly to remark," explains Fairchild, "is the reason which God assigns for His tender concern respecting ' little ones' - their personal innocence; their incapacity of actual moral wrong.

"Their adult fathers were guilty on their own account, and He [Jehovah God] might with justice have destroyed them [viz the adult fathers]. But the little ones - who ' could not discern between their right hand and their left' [namely] the ' innocent' -- were regarded by Him with affectionate compassion."

Rev. Dr. M Conoughty *Are Infants Saved?* and W.E. Schenck *Children in Heaven*

In his own work (*Are Infants Saved?*) yet another Presbyterian, Rev. Dr. David M' Conoughty, discusses the situation in Second Kings 4:17-37. There, Elisha resuscitates the child of the Shunammite woman.

Explains Rev. Dr. M' Conoughty⁴⁵⁸: "When her son had suddenly died, she hastened to visit the prophet Elisha. On her near approach, the prophet sent his servant to meet her and to ask, ' Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?' And she answered, ' It is **well!**'

"How could she **so** answer, in relation to her child, who was dead -- and, for aught she knew, irrecoverably?" Indeed she could **not** - unless she rightly knew that the dead child had passed away **after** having been **justified** by grace and through faith.

Later, another prophet of Israel denounced his apostate people for slaughtering their own children. Jeremiah 2:1f,34f & 19:4. Rev. Dr. M' Conoughty here very properly observes⁴⁵⁹

"The unnatural and horrid crime of the people of Israel in sacrificing their children to Moloch, is thus denounced by the prophet Jeremiah: ' And in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the innocents!' This phrase, ' the innocents' - is twice used by the prophet to denote the death of infants.

"This is not designed to affirm their innocence in the sight of God, but to denote the cruelty of this conduct as the act of man [alias of mature menfolk]; and that their death was not the infliction of the wrath of God, but a murderous deed of vile idolatry [by man] - which God abhorred and condemned. Their age and condition render them [the thus-slaughtered infant children] comparatively innocent."

There is also the Presbyterian W.E. Schenck' s very thought-provoking book⁴⁶⁰ *Children in Heaven* - sub-titled: *The Infant Dead Redeemed by the Blood of Jesus*. In many ways, it

presaged the later appearance of his namesake's book *The Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant* - by Rev. Professor Dr. L.B. Schenck.⁴⁶¹

Rev. Professor Dr. R.A. Webb's Calvin Memorial Addresses

John Calvin's own views on elect and reprobate infants were thoroughly investigated by Rev. Professor Dr. R.A. Webb, of Southwestern Presbyterian University in Tennessee. In his famous *Calvin Memorial Addresses*, Webb demonstrates⁴⁶² how "Calvin teaches that all the reprobate 'procure' - that is his [Calvin's] own word - 'procure' their own destruction.... They procure their destruction by their own personal and conscious acts of 'impiety' ; 'wickedness' ; and 'rebellion'

"Now reprobate infants, though guilty of original sin and [therefore] under condemnation, cannot while they are infants thus 'procure' their own destruction by their personal acts of impiety, wickedness and rebellion. They must therefore live to the years of moral responsibility - in order to perpetrate the acts of impiety, wickedness and rebellion which Calvin defines as the **mode** through which they procure their destruction.

"While, therefore, Calvin teaches that there are reprobate infants and that these will be lost finally - he nowhere teaches that they will be lost **as infants**, and **while they are infants**.... On the contrary, he [viz. Calvin] declares that all the reprobate 'procure' their own destruction by personal acts of impiety, wickedness and rebellion. Consequently, his own [viz. John Calvin's] reasoning compels him to hold (to be consistent with himself) that no reprobate child can die in infancy - but all such must live to the age of moral accountability - and translate original sin into actual sin."

Rev. Professor Dr. Webb's 1907 Theology of Infant Salvation

In his landmark 1907 book *The Theology of Infant Salvation*,⁴⁶³ Rev. Professor Dr. Webb deals with the everlasting election or alternatively the everlasting reprobation of key persons mentioned in the Bible - such as Cain; Abel; Seth; Isaac; Jacob; Esau; Moses; Samson; Samuel; David; the latter's infantly-dying son; Josiah; the child of wicked Jeroboam; the sons of the widow of Zarephath, and of the Shunammite woman; John the Baptist; and the infants blessed by Jesus *etc.* He also gives important citations about such persons - from the writings of Calvin, Bengel and Stier *etc.*

Professor Webb acknowledges that Esau was reprobate even before he was born.⁴⁶⁴ Yet Holy Scripture does not claim that God revealed **this** fact either to Esau or to his parents while they were here on Earth. Throughout their lifetimes, they were all urged to encourage Esau to repent and to trust in God.

Webb makes some thought-provoking statements especially about Elijah's restoration of the son of the Sidonian widow of Zarephath in First Kings chapter seventeen. "Here," observes Webb,⁴⁶⁵ "is an instance of the resurrection of a dead child - a great and marvellous event.

"It was instrumentally the result of...the prayers of a great man of God. My conclusion is that all the probabilities are against the supposition that he was a reprobate child."

Professor Webb also reflects on the restoration of the child of the Shunammite woman by Elisha - in Second Kings chapter four. "At Shunem," he explains,⁴⁶⁶ "Elisha had [years earlier] received hospitality at the hands of a ' great woman.' She, with the concurrence of her husband, built for the man of God ' a little chamber' - for him to occupy, as suited his convenience and itinerations. This couple was childless.... In response to the prophet' s prayer, God gladdened them with a son -- who later had a sunstroke...and died.

"The woman carried her grief to the prophet.... Then [Elisha] the prophet stretched himself upon the child. ' And the child sneezed seven times; and the child opened its eyes.' Second Kings 4:35."

Webb' s observation here is terse and to the point. "To grant [the return of earthly life to] a reprobate child, in response to prayer -- would be worse than giving a stone, instead of bread.... It were better that a reprobate child be not raised from the dead." Consequently, the assumption is that this dead child was one of God' s elect.

Dr. Webb concludes:⁴⁶⁷ "We are indebted to Calvin for exploding the doctrine that children are saved by baptism.... It is undeniable that he did, in his *Commentary on the Gospels*, grasp the fact." Indeed, he clearly did "in his comment on the ' Suffer little children' sayings of our Lord."

Inconsistent views of modern Baptists anent infant salvation

What about the views of modern Baptists? Norman Fox, in his book *The Unfolding of Baptist Doctrine*, incorrectly alleges⁴⁶⁸ that "not only the Roman Catholics believed in the damnation of infants." Who else, then?

According to Fox, "the favourite poet of Presbyterian Scotland" - by which Fox means the viciously anti-Calvinistic Robbie Burns - "in his *Tam O Shanter*, names among objects from hell: ' Twa span-lang, wee unchristened bairns.' ~~THE~~ *Westminster Confession* - in declaring that ' elect infants dying in infancy' are saved - implies that non-elect infants dying in infancy are lost." Thus Norman Fox.

Frankly, the Baptist Fox is in that respect little better than the infidel Robbie Burns himself. For both Burns and Fox here ignorantly confuse Calvinism with Romanism.

More balanced than Fox by far, is the noted Baptist Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Alvah Hovey. He believed that all early-dying infants are saved. Somewhat relatedly, he also believed that the World as a whole will yet get saved (postmillennially).

Rev. Professor Dr. Hovey declared⁴⁶⁹ that "in respect to the future condition of those who die in infancy, one can scarcely err in deriving...a favourable conclusion.... The Saviour nowhere teaches that they are in danger of being lost. We therefore heartily and confidently believe

that they are redeemed by the blood of Christ and sanctified by His Spirit so that when they enter the unseen world, they will be found with the saints."

Warfield explains⁴⁷⁰ how "Hovey brings his little book on *Biblical Eschatology* to a close - with a reference ' to the vast preponderance of good over evil as the fruit of redemption.... The good will far outnumber the bad; the saved will be many times more than the lost'

"Dr. Hovey...lays stress (with Dr. Hodge) on the salvation of all who died in infancy.... He also (more tellingly) brings into view (like Dr. Dabney) ' the duration and character' of the so-called ' millennium' " - and, like Warfield himself, specifically from a postmillennial perspective.

Baptist Rev. Professor Dr. A.H. Strong: babies regenerated before getting to Heaven

Like Alvah Hovey, yet another famous postmillennial Baptist Professor (Rev. Dr. Augustus H. Strong) similarly explains⁴⁷¹ that "if infants are regenerated, they also are regenerated in conjunction with some influence of truth upon the mind - dim as the recognition of it may be.... Infants are in a state of sin." Accordingly, insists Professor Strong, they too "need to be regenerated - and can be saved only through Christ.... They are the objects of special divine compassion and care, and through the grace of Christ are certain of salvation....

"Jesus' words," continues Strong, "seem intended to exclude all idea that infants are saved by their natural holiness, or without application to them of the blessings of His atonement. They also seem to us to include infants among the number of those who have the right to these blessings. In other words, Christ' s concern and care go so far as to choose infants to eternal life, and to make them subjects of the Kingdom of Heaven.

"Cf. Matthew 18:14 - ' it is not the will of your Father Who is in Heaven, that one of those little ones should perish' Those whom Christ has received here, He will not reject hereafter.... This is said to infants [Strong means about infants], as infants.... Those who die in infancy, receive salvation through Christ as certainly as they inherit sin from Adam....

"As without personal act of theirs, infants inherited corruption from Adam - so without personal act of theirs, salvation is provided for them in Christ.... David ceased to fast and weep - when his child died. For he said: ' I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.' Second Samuel 12:23....

"The work of regeneration may be performed by the Spirit in connection with the infant soul' s first view of Christ [though surely in his or her present earthly life, and before his or her physical death].... We agree with...writers as to the salvation of all infants who die before the age of conscious and wilful transgression."

There are, however, some modern Baptists like Rev. David Kingdon (see later below) who doubt infant salvation. Indeed, there are even some who flatly deny it. Among these '*tohu-wabohu*' or amorphous Baptists - *quot homines, tot sententiae!* They have as many opinions as there are persons. For sentiment, rather than theology, generally rules **their** roost.

Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff: the Early Church assumed infant salvation

In 1910, the famous Swiss-American German Reformed Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff usefully put all of this into historical perspective. In his mammoth *History of the Christian Church*, he reminds us⁴⁷² that "the Apostolic Church was a Missionary Church - and had first to establish a mother community in the bosom of which alone the grace of Baptism can be ' improved' by a Christian education.

"So, even under the Old Covenant, circumcision was first performed on the adult Abraham.... So, all Christian Missionaries in heathen lands now begin with preaching and baptizing adults....

"We have presumptive and positive arguments for the apostolic origin and character of infant baptism...in the fact that circumcision...truly prefigured baptism.... Then: in the organic relation between Christian parents and children; in the nature of the New Covenant, which is even more comprehensive than the Old; in the universal virtue of Christ as the Redeemer of all...ages; and especially in the import of His own infancy, which has redeemed and sanctified the infantile age."

We find further arguments for the presumptive regeneration of covenant babies (and therefore for subsequent infant baptism too), continues Schaff, also in our Lord Jesus Christ' s "express invitation to children whom He assures of a title to the Kingdom of Heaven - and whom therefore He certainly would not leave without the sign and seal of such membership." Then - specifically as regards baptism in general (and infant baptism in particular) - "the words of institution...plainly look to the christianizing not merely of [many] individuals but of whole nations - including, of course, the children."

We also find arguments for presumptive regeneration "in the express declaration of Peter at the first administration of the ordinance - that this promise of forgiveness of sins and of the Holy Spirit was to the [penitent] Jews ' and to their children.' [Again, there are] the five instances in the New Testament of the baptism of whole families, where the presence of children in most of the cases is far more probable than the absence of children in all." Lastly, we also find proof "in the universal practice of the Early Church."

Concludes Schaff: "**Infants**...may be **regenerated** (this being an act of God); but [while yet **infants**], they **cannot** be **converted**.... [For] they cannot repent....

"Nor do they need repentance [while infants], having not yet committed any actual transgression.... Christ, Who is the truth, blessed **unbaptized** infants, and declared: ' To such [**God-blessed** unbaptized infants] belongs the Kingdom of Heaven.' "

Rev. Professor Dr. Schaff' s personal view: all dying in infancy are saved

Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff' s own views on all this, crystallized out around 1870 Those views were augmented for the last time by David S. Schaff in 1931 - and reprinted thus, in 1983.

"The Reformed Church," writes Schaff,⁴⁷³ "teaches the salvation of all **elect** infants dying in infancy, whether **baptized or not**; and assumes that they are regenerated.... *Westminster Confession* chapter X paragraph 3: ' Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ.... So also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word.' The last sentence may be fairly interpreted as teaching the election and salvation of a portion of heathen **adults**. [First John 5:12 & Acts 4:12]....

"We may...within the strict limits of the Reformed Creed...maintain, as a pious opinion, that all departed infants belong to the number of the elect. Their early removal from a World of sin and temptation may be taken as an indication of God' s special favour. From this - it would follow that the majority of the human race will be saved.

"The very doctrine of election - which is unlimitable and free of all ordinary means - at all events widens the possibility and strengthens the probability of general infant salvation.... Those Churches which hold to the necessity of baptismal regeneration, must either consistently exclude from Heaven all unbaptized infants (even those of Christian Baptists and Quakers) - or, yielding to the instinct of Christian charity, they must make exceptions so innumerable that these would become in fact the rule, and overthrow the principle altogether....

"In the seventeenth century, the Arminians resumed the position of Zwingli.... They could consistently teach the general salvation of [all] infants. The Methodists and Baptists adopted the same view.... In the strictly Calvinistic Churches, it made steady progress, and is now silently or openly held by nearly all Reformed divines....

"The doctrine of infant damnation is [most] certainly cruel - and revolting to every nobler and better feeling of our nature. It cannot be charged upon the Bible....

"The general salvation of infants...is far more consistent with: the love of God; the genius of Christianity; and the spirit and conduct of HimWho shed His precious blood for all ages of mankind." For our Saviour "held up little children to His own disciples as models of simplicity and trustfulness." Indeed, He "took them to His bosom - blessing them and saying (unconditionally and before Christian baptism did exist) ' Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven' and ' whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child...shall in nowise enter therein'

"While the other [than specifically-Calvinistic] confessions conceal the real difficulty, Calvinism reveals it - and thus brings it nearer to a solution." Thus "the Calvinistic system, by detaching election from the absolute necessity of water-baptism, has a positive advantage.... All the creeds which teach baptismal regeneration as an indispensable prerequisite of salvation virtually exclude the overwhelming majority of mankind, whole nations with untold millions of infants dying in infancy, from the Kingdom of Heaven (whether they expressly say so or not)....

"The Calvinistic theory affords a more substantial relief and allows, after the precedent of Zwingli and Bullinger..., an indefinite extension of God' s saving grace beyond the limits of the Visible Church and the ordinary means of grace. It leaves room for the charitable hope of

the salvation of all infants dying in infancy.... The [*Westminster*] *Confession* nowhere speaks of reprobate infants, and the existence of such is not necessarily implied by way of distinction....

"That the number of the saved will far exceed the number of the lost -- may fairly be inferred from the *polloo, mallon* [or the ' much more'] of Paul. Romans 5:15-17. But this inference cannot well be harmonized with the declaration of our Lord, Matthew 7:14, that but **few** enter the strait gate - **unless** we assume the universal salvation of infants [dying while yet babies], and look forward to great progress of the Gospel in the future."

In that way, Matthew 7:14' s statement that "few" were entering through the straight gate is to be understood as referring to the behaviour of adults [but **not infants**] at the time Christ made that statement. Thus, it is not to be regarded as teaching that most adults and/or all infants would never at any future period of history be able to enter into the "gate" which is "narrow."

Rev. Dr. Stagg: Calvin, Twisse & Edwards on the Universal Salvation of Dying Infants

Very important is a book by another Presbyterian - Rev. Dr. John W. Stagg. We are referring to his work titled *Calvin, Twisse and Edwards on the Universal Salvation of Infants*.

There, Dr. Stagg not only discusses⁴⁷⁴ citations from those writers - favourable to the salvation of those dying in early infancy. In addition, he also gives similar quotations from Holland' s Classic Dutch Reformed Theologian Leydecker; from Rev. Dr. J.V. Stephens; from Rev. Professor Dr. A.A. Hodge; from Rev. Dr. Henry J. Van Dyke; and from Rev. Professors Dr. George L. Prentiss, T.C. Johnson, and Philip Schaff.

Indeed, Stagg further includes several favourable citations even from a leading (anti-Calvinistic) Lutheran. We refer to Rev. Professor Dr. Charles P. Krauth - author of the famous book *Infant Baptism and Infant Salvation in the Calvinistic System*.

Presbyterian Rev. Luther Link: all dying in infancy are finally saved

Also significant, is the Southern Presbyterian Rev. Luther Link' s 1912 book *Infant Salvation and Confessional Revision*. There, he advocates⁴⁷⁵ the final salvation of all dying in infancy - and makes a number of important exegetical observations. Link made a very important observation about a statement in Numbers 14:31. We mean the declaration that God would bring the ' little ones' into the promised land which their own faithless parents had despised.

Here, according to Link,⁴⁷⁶ "the final judgment really comes to them [the ' little ones'] when they die - and so is simply the application of the same principle in time to the final destiny.... God regarded the difference in the maturity of the faculties as making a great difference in the degree of guilt."

Then again, in Numbers 31:18 there is an important statement regarding pagan female ' children who have not known a man.' Link maintains⁴⁷⁷ here that "this passage...exempts

children of a certain class from the sins and disabilities of heathendom, and actually incorporates them in a block into the Church.... The girls could be incorporated."

Similarly, in Deuteronomy 31:10-13, the Bible mentions tiny Israelitic ' children which have not known any thing' - before the time they had lived long enough to experience even God' s Law being read to them for the very first time postnatally. Here, Luther Link applies the quoted words even to pagan children.

Rev. Link thus comments: "God did not discriminate against the heathen children simply because they were heathen children.... This conclusion is rendered more probable by Deuteronomy 31:12*f* - by which those who were old enough to learn, might receive instruction in the truth of God.

"Once every seven years, [*viz.*] in the year of release in the feast of tabernacles, all the people were to be assembled to hear the Law read.... Here is the separate mention of the children" - *viz.*, "announcing a special reference (in this meeting) to them." Indeed, the **very** tiny babies would obviously have needed to have been reminded about this again and again - **thereafter**.

Presbyterian Rev. Luther Link on infant salvation (continued)

Now Rev. Link claims⁴⁷⁸ (with Calvin) that Ezekiel chapter eighteen discounts the view "which makes the children to be held accountable for their fathers' sins." He holds, further, that this "deals with the matter of the final judgment." Then he gives considerable attention to Jonah' s evangelization of the Ninevites.

Like many Calvinists before him, Link here gives much consideration to those spared in Nineveh. He rightly argues⁴⁷⁹ that the spared ' 120 000 persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left' - in Jonah 4:11 - obviously included very many of the pagan Ninevite "infants of tender years who had no knowledge of good and evil."

What Link here neglects to mention, however, is that this was only after the adults' conversions - when ' the people of Nineveh **believed** God.' The holy prophet says they did so, "from the greatest of them **even to the least of them**' - and that they then '**turned from** their evil way.' Jonah 3:5 & 3:10.

Thus, also such Ninevite children and babies as were spared - indeed, possibly all of them - were saved. Yet they were saved probably through their parents' repentance - and no doubt also through their **own** concomitant repentance and newly-found belief in Jonah' s God. Indeed, they were not spared on account of their previous ignorance - but by grace, and through a God-given faith.

Luther Link' s citations from the New Testament as such, are not very appropriate⁴⁸⁰ More cogently, however, Link comments⁴⁸¹ on Zechariah chapter thirteen that "here we have a prophecy of Christ' s [New Testament] atoning sacrifice introduced in advance of the prophecy of judgment upon the wicked.... We read, ' but the third shall be left therein.'

"Before pronouncing this judgment," explains Link, "it is specially declared that ' the little ones' are not included.... Since, however, this prophecy is of judgment upon the wicked as such - the exemption of ' the little ones' places them amongst the saved."

Rev. Dr. Samuel G. Craig: salvation for all dying infants

In 1931, the American Presbyterian Theologian Rev. Dr. Samuel G. Craig wrote an important article in the well-known magazine *Christianity Today*. He himself had then for quite some time been its Editor.

Stated Dr. Craig:⁴⁸² "We take it that no doctrine of infant salvation is **Christian**, that does not assume that [tiny] infants are lost members of a lost race - for whom there is no salvation apart from Christ. It must be obvious to all, therefore, that the doctrine that all dying in infancy are saved - will not fit into the Roman Catholic or Anglo-Catholic system of thought, with their teaching of baptismal regeneration.... [For] most of those who have died in infancy, have **not** been baptized.

"It is obvious also that the Lutheran system of thought provides no place for the notion that all dying in infancy are saved." This is so, "because of the necessity it attaches to the means of grace - especially the Word and the Sacraments....

"The Arminian has no right to believe in the salvation of all dying in infancy. In fact, it is not so clear that he has any right to believe in the salvation of **any** dying in infancy." For that matter - we ourselves may add - it is not clear how Arminians can safely trust that any dying even as adults may be saved!

"For according to the Arminians, even the evangelical Arminians" - Dr. Craig further explains - "God in His grace has merely provided men with an opportunity for salvation. It does not appear, however, that a mere opportunity for salvation can be of any avail - for those dying in infancy" (**or** later). For Arminianism only makes salvation possible for all but certain for none

"The history of the phrase ' Elect infants dying in infancy' [in the *Westminster Confession* 10:3] makes clear that the contrast implied, was not between ' elect infants dying in infancy' and ' non-elect infants dying in infancy.' " To the contrary, the contrast is far "rather between ' elecinfants dying in infancy' and ' elect infants living to grow up.' " It is impossible plausibly to maintain that Presbyterians teach that there are non-elect infants who die in infancy.

Professor Dr. Loraine Boettner: all dying infants were elected

Professor Dr. Loraine Boettner elaborated on this, in his famous book *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. Maintained Boettner:⁴⁸³ "Most Calvinistic Theologians have held that those who die in infancy are saved. "The Scriptures," continues Boettner, "seem to teach plainly enough that the children of believers are saved. But they are silent, or practically so, in regard to those of the heathens.

"The *Westminster Confession* does not pass judgment on the children of heathens who die before coming to years of accountability. Where the Scriptures are silent, the *Confession* too preserves silence.

"Our outstanding Theologians, however, mindful...that God' s ' tender mercies are over all His works' [James 5:11]...have entertained a charitable hope.... Since these infants have never committed any actual sin themselves, their inherited sin would be pardoned - and they would be saved on wholly evangelical principles. Such for instance was the position held by Charles Hodge, W.G.T. Shedd, and B.B. Warfield....

"Though rejecting the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and turning the baptism of the non-elect into an empty form, Calvinism...extends saving grace far beyond the boundaries of the Visible Church. If it is true that all of those who die in infancy, in heathen as well as in Christian lands, are saved - then more than half of the human race even up to the present time has been among the elect....

"It is sometimes charged that Calvin taught the actual damnation of some of those who die in infancy. A careful examination of his writings, however, does not bear out that charge. He explicitly taught that some of the elect die in infancy - and that they are saved as infants.

"He also taught that there were reprobate infants. For he held that reprobation as well as election was eternal, and that the non-elect come into this life reprobate.

"But nowhere did he teach that the reprobate die and are lost as infants. He of course rejected the Pelagian view which denied original sin and [which] grounded the salvation of those who die in infancy on their supposed innocence and sinlessness....

"In none of Calvin' s writings does he say, either directly or by good and necessary inference, that any dying in infancy are lost. Most of the passages which are brought forth by opponents to prove this point - are merely assertions of his well-known doctrine of original sin - in which he taught the universal guilt and depravity of the entire race."

In light of the above, Professor Boettner then draws his own personal conclusion. "All of those dying in infancy," he insists, "are among the elect."

Rev. Prof. L.B. Schenck *Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant*

Rev. Professor Dr. Lewis B. Schenck, in his most important book *The Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant*, very confidently and also altogether correctly asserts:⁴⁸⁴ "The Theologians of the Presbyterian Church believed that all men, infants as well as adults, were in a state of sin.... Infants too were lost members of a lost race -and only those savingly united to Christ, were saved.

"Infants needed salvation - because they were really ' culpable and punishable.' It was fundamental to this very conception of Christianity, that it was a remedial scheme.

" ' Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners.' The salvation [also] of an infant was an act of unobliged and unmerited grace - just as that of an adult....

"Infant salvation was real, for it was the deliverance of one who was really guilty. And it was costly; for it was by the sacrificial death of the Son of God (W.G.T. Shedd).... ' Communion with God was lost for all alike, and to infants too it was restored only in Christ' (Warfield)....

"According to Dr. Shedd, the truth but not the whole truth is told - when it is merely said that Calvinism teaches the damnation of [some] infants [though not **as** infants]. It teaches the...salvation also [of **other** infants, and indeed this time also often **as** infants].... In the instance of [early-dying] little children, it is the mercy of God that saves them. In their case - ' where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' " Romans 5:20.

For Calvinism teaches the damnworthiness of all children, both elect and reprobate, on account of the transmission to them of the heinous guilt of Adam' s first sin. It also teaches the election of some - and even the damnation of other infants - from all eternity. Yet **as regards babies dying during their infancy** - it has never taught the everlasting damnation of any, and still less of many.

Continues Schenck: "The Reformed Church has always believed...that all children of believers dying in infancy, were saved.... As Dr. Warfield said..., ' infants too are included in the election of grace.... All who die in infancy, are the children of God - and enter at once [immediately after their death] into His glory'

"This position of Rev. Dr. Warfield' s is corroborated by the unanimous testimony of Presbyterian authors. [Rev.] Dr. N.L. Rice, [1858 Editor of *The Presbyterian Expositor*], said - ' I never heard a Presbyterian Minister nor read a Presbyterian Author who expressed the opinion that infants dying in infancy are lost'

"Of the Westminster Assembly' s phraseology respecting ' elect infants dying in infancy' ...the antithesis was considered to be - between ' elect infants dying in infancy' and ' elect infants not dying in infancy.' According to this conception, which was that of the [Southern] Presbyterian Church in the U.S., there were no non-elect infants dying in infancy."

Rev. Dr. D.J. De Groot: ungodly Jeroboam' s dying child was saved

In 1950, the modern Dutch Calvinist Rev. Dr. D.J. De Groot published his definitive book *The Rebirth*. There, he expressed a confident opinion about the everlasting destination of the early-dying child of the ungodly Jeroboam in First Kings 14:1-13.

Observed De Groot:⁴⁸⁵ "This son of a godless father stood in the right faith-relationship to God.... He had a heart to fear and serve the Lord." Unfortunately, "we do not know the time of life which he had reached when he first consciously began to live thus." Nevertheless, the presumption is certainly that this early-dying child of an ungodly father himself went to glory.

Rev. Professor Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr. on the salvation of all dying in infancy

In 1963, Rev. Professor Dr. J. Oliver Buswell (Jr.) - of Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis - published his *Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*. There, he expressed⁴⁸⁶ his own conviction that "the sufficiency and universality of the convicting work of the Holy Spirit extends to cover the question of the salvation of those dying in infancy."

Explained Rev. Professor Buswell: "Those who die in infancy are saved through the atonement of Christ, and are regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit.... Cf. Warfield' s magnificent study, *Infant Salvation*...."

"The Holy Spirit of God prior to the moment of death does so enlarge the intelligence of ones who die in infancy.... They are [made] capable of accepting Jesus Christ" and indeed do so receive Him as their Saviour. Indeed, as regards the salvation of those dying in infancy, Buswell concludes that "the *Westminster Confession* goes as far as we have any right to go in defining church doctrine. ' Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit'

"Warfield' s article...shows the history of the doctrine in Reformed Theology, and the general tendency (exemplified in Charles Hodge) to accept the probability of the salvation of all who die in infancy.... Those who die in infancy, God is able to regenerate them through faith."

Baptist Rev. D. Kingdon: all dying babies seem unregenerate

1975 saw Rev. David Kingdon, a so-called ' Reformed Baptist' (indeed a contradiction in terms) - publish his important book *Children of Abraham*. There, Kingdon maintained⁴⁸⁷ that there is **no** ground "for presuming that children [even] of Christian parents who die in infancy are to be adjudged regenerate...."

"In the matter of infant salvation, one can only adopt an attitude of reverent and hopeful agnosticism.... We can be no more certain of the election of our children, than of the children of unbelievers.... We treat our children as if they were unconverted, until we are satisfied that they are" -- that is, until satisfied that they have indeed been converted.

It is tragic indeed whenever any Christian embraces ' agnosticism' in any form. It is doubly tragic when this is done by an ' Evangelical.'

The above statements of Kingdon were held even more severely also by another well-known Baptist Minister. That Minister, who shall remain unnamed, once presumed (positively) to tell the writer of this present dissertation - that all dying in infancy are lost (negatively). Sadly (yet not surprisingly), he added that all of his six children after professing Christ and getting submersed upon reaching ' the age of discretion' – had subsequently turned away.

Such views are truly appalling. Not only do they give no hope at all for the salvation of the dying babies of unbelievers.

They also give very little hope that the early-dying infants even of Christians may end up in Heaven. It is indeed enigmatic why such Christians ever marry at all - or at any rate, ever desire to beget children.

1992 Australians on the everlasting destination of early-dying children

In 1992, Rev. Dr. Rowland S. Ward of the (Free) Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia published his book *The Westminster Confession for the Church Today*. There, he insisted⁴⁸⁸ that chapter 10:3 (of the *Confession*) "is dealing with the way by which infants may be saved, and not the number of such persons." Accordingly, "the appropriateness of the term 'elect infants' is clear....

"Calvinists have always held that the infant children of believers are saved who die in infancy or in the womb, and many have held that **all** infants dying such are saved.... Calvinists have the only satisfactory basis for affirming the salvation of any infants....

"It is open to a subscriber to the *Confession* to believe **all** infants dying such are saved.... That the phrase '**others** not elected' includes non-elect infants dying such and non-elect persons who have never had the faculty of reason...seems doubtful."

Also in 1992, the Presbyterian Church of Australia's Rev. Professor Dr. Tom Wilkinson published his interesting work *The Westminster Confession Now*. There, commenting on 10:3, he remarked:⁴⁸⁹

"The primary intention here is to give assurance to believing parents whose children die before they are old enough to understand and believe the Gospel. The other intention is to explain how it is possible for such infants to be saved....

"All the elect will be saved.... What the *CF* [*Confession of Faith*] does, is to say that such infants are also elect and regenerated and saved by Christ.... Scripture does not explicitly tell us that all infants will be saved, but there are reasons for thinking that they will....

"It is not only infants...who may yet be regenerated - for there are other extraordinary cases, *e.g.* those severely retarded.... The Spirit may work in them also."

Summary of the Twentieth-Century Church on infant salvation

The new 1901 *Declaratory Statement of Presbyterian Church of Australia* insisted: "None are saved, except through the mediation of Christ and by the grace of the Holy Spirit Who worketh where and when and how it pleases Him.... In accepting the *Subordinate Standard* [namely the *Westminster Confession*], it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost."

The 1903 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* [a Church now greatly in decline], however, insisted that "God's eternal decree is [to be] held in harmony

with the doctrine of His love to all mankind." Subsequently, it further pontificated, especially "Chapter X Section 3 of the *Confession of Faith*...is not to be regarded as teaching that any who die in infancy are lost." It even boldly added: "We believe that all dying in infancy...are regenerated."

The conservative Presbyterian Rev. Professor Dr. B.B. Warfield opined that salvation was for all dying in infancy. So too did many others of his fellow-Presbyterians, such as: Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff; Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green Fairchild; Rev. Dr. David M' Conoughty; Rev. W.E. Schenck; Rev. Professor Dr. R.A. Webb; Rev. Dr. John W. Stagg (who approvingly cited Calvin, Twisse and Edwards); Rev. Luther Link; Rev. Dr. Samuel G. Craig; Professor Dr. Loraine Boettner; Rev. Professor Dr. L.B. Schenck; Rev. Dr. D.J. De Groot; and Rev. Professor Dr. J.Oliver Buswell Jr.

Inconsistent views anent infant salvation, however, were held by many modern Baptist Theologians. Such include: Rev. Norman Fox, Rev. Professor Dr. Alvah Hovey, and Rev. Professor Dr. Augustus H. Strong.

To the noted Baptist Rev. David Kingdon, there can only be a "hopeful agnosticism" as to the everlasting destination of any dying babies. To yet another Baptist acquaintance of the present author - indeed, a Baptist with a (dissertationless) honorary doctorate in theology - all dying as babies seem to be unregenerate.

However, to the 1992 Australian Presbyterians Rev. Dr. Rowland S. Ward and Rev. Professor Dr. T.L. Wilkinson, the heavenly destination of such little ones seems to be far more hopeful. Both teach the certainty of the salvation of all infantly-dying children of believers - and the strong possibility that the dying babies also of unbelieving parents may be saved (by the great grace of God alone).

XI. OUR OWN VIEW ON THE SALVATION OF EARLY-DYING INFANTS

In this last chapter, we shall give our own view on the salvation of early-dying infants. Here, we shall take a look at the everlasting destiny of early-dying children; at Articles I to IV in the *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*; at its 'liberty of opinion' clause regarding the salvation of those dying while babies; and at its [*Ordination*] *Formula* as regards infants. Finally, we shall then look at the everlasting destiny of aborted or miscarried fetuses.

Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Nigel Lee on the everlasting destiny of early-dying children

At this point, this present author - Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Nigel Lee - gives his own views on infant salvation, to date. In his much earlier article *The Salvation of Early-Dying Infants*, he observed:⁴⁹⁰

1, because of original sin, everyone (believers and their little children as well as unbelievers and their little children) deserves everlasting punishment in body and soul - albeit in varying degrees. Luke 12:48.

2, because of the covenant of grace, the Lord Jesus Christ through His blood saves the elect alone. John 10:15,26 & 17:9,14. 'The others [i.e. the reprobate] have been hardened.' Romans 11:7 and also 9:11-24.

3, the **known** elect are especially the adult believers and **their** early-dying covenant children. Acts 13:48 & Second Samuel 12:23. The **unknown** elect are the following.

A, the non-early-dying elect children of the covenant (like the tiny Isaac and Jacob). Cf. Romans 9:7-13. Their election should be presupposed already in their early youth - even though it seems more apparent to some only after their later (yet still rebuttable) profession of faith. First Corinthians 7:14.

B, those unbelieving adults outside the covenant who from all eternity have been predestined to be regenerated and converted before their death. Romans 10:11,14.

C, such early-dying little children of unbelieving parents as it may wonderfully and mercifully please Almighty God to regenerate by His Spirit, and to save through the blood of Christ. Numbers 31:15-18; Deuteronomy 20:10-15; First Kings 14:1-13.

4, the reprobate are the adult unbelievers who die in their sin unregeneratedly. They include the following.

A, the non-early-dying unbelieving little children of the covenant (like Esau). Their unbelief would only later, when grown up, become manifest to mankind. Romans 9:10-13 & Hebrews 12:16-17.

B, those adult unbelievers outside the covenant who die in their sins unconvertedly. See *inter alia* Romans 2:14-16.

C, the little children of unbelievers outside the covenant who die unregenerate in their later years. First Corinthians 7:14 *cf.* Deuteronomy 20:16-18.

Yet until they are resurrected on Judgment Day, nobody can determine irrefutably whether the little children of unbelievers belong in category 3C or in category 4C above. It is therefore theologically irresponsible to maintain: that no early-dying babies outside the covenant can be saved; that all ailing infants have been saved; or that all such will definitely be saved before they die (and especially after they die).

Lee then concluded that the Reformed viewpoint is Biblical. **Godly** parents should be **assured** of the **salvation** of **all** of their **early-dying little covenant children** - because God Himself calls the latter holy. First Corinthians 7:14b; *Decrees of Dordt* I:17; and *Westminster Confession* 10:3.

Yet **unbelieving** parents - although God calls their early-dying little children 'unclean' (First Corinthians 7:14a) - can yet be pointed to the **mercy** of Almighty God. Compare Genesis 18:23-26; Numbers 32:17-18; Deuteronomy 20:10-15; First Kings 14:1-13; Psalm 8:2*f.*

Lee on Articles I & II in the Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement

Lee later expanded on the above. He did so in his 1991 paper titled *I Confess!* It bore the sub-title: *Holy Scripture, the Westminster Confession, and the Declaratory Statement - Their Relationship to One Another in the Presbyterian Church of Australia*. There, he explained⁴⁹¹ that the 1901 *Australian Declaratory Statement* itself warmly upholds the *Westminster Confession of Faith* - as the sole subordinate standard of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

At the outset, the Statement (Article I), refers to 'the doctrine of redemption - as taught in the *Subordinate Standard*.' More specifically, the Statement here refers to God's 'gift of His Son to be the propitiation' - by virtue of 'Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice' - as being 'vital to the Christian faith.'

Continues the *Australian Declaratory Statement*: 'The Christian faith rests upon...certain objective supernatural historic facts.' This good *Australian Declaratory Statement* then gives a few clear examples of such important facts. Specifically referred to, are *inter alia* 'the Incarnation' of the Son of God in human flesh and 'the atoning Life and Death' of Jesus.

Especially this word 'atoning' in the *Declaratory Statement*, is quite significant. Throughout, however, this *Declaratory Statement* here presupposes **all** the relevant teachings on redemption in the *Westminster Confession* -- at the latter's chapters 3:6 & 8:5-8 & 10:1-3.

For Article I of the *Australian Declaratory Statement* starts off by referring to 'the doctrine of redemption as taught in the *Subordinate Standard*' - and then draws its conclusion. 'This

Church regards those whom it admits to the office of the Holy Ministry as pledged to give a chief place in their teaching to these cardinal facts, and to the message of redemption.'

In Article II, the *Australian Declaratory Statement* next tells us ' that the doctrine of God' s eternal decree, including the doctrine of election to eternal life - is held as defined in the *Confession of Faith*, Chapter III, Section I.' Here, the *Australian Declaratory Statement* very clearly upholds the Classic Calvinistic doctrines of everlasting predestination and election.

Yet all fatalistic understandings of those doctrines, are unbiblical - and therefore uncalvinistic. Consequently, the Calvinistic *Australian Declaratory Statement* then rightly directs itself specifically against the heresy of **hyper**-calvinism. For the *Statement* here declares that God ' has provided a salvation sufficient for all and adapted to all and offered to all in the Gospel.'

Lee on infants in Articles III & IV of the Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement

In Article III, the *Australian Declaratory Statement* teaches that ' none are saved except through the mediation of Christ.' Here, the *Statement* insists on '**accepting** the *Subordinate Standard*.'

Compare the *Westminster Confession* 10:1-4. That insists: that only those ' predestinated unto life' are granted ' salvation by Jesus Christ' ; that ' elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit' ; but that ' others not elected...cannot be saved'.

At the same time - continues Article III of the *Statement* - this doctrine taught in the *Confession* (10:1-4) very definitely needs to be interpreted **properly**! Thus, this doctrine of the *Confession* - insists the *Statement* - should be so understood that ' it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost.'

For the *Westminster Confession* (10:1-4) - on effectual calling unto salvation by the Holy Spirit - does **not** deal with the **number** of God' s elect who die in infancy. **Nor** does it deal with their ability **measurably to respond** to the preached Word.

Neither does it imply the hopelessness as regards their salvation of ' all other elect persons...incapable of being **outwardly** called' *etc.* Instead, it suggests just the contrary.

For it clearly declares that even '**elect** infants dying in infancy' are graciously **regenerated** and saved by Christ through the Spirit.' *Viz.*, before they die when yet babies - either prenatally or postnatally.

In Article IV, the *Australian Declaratory Statement* directly approves '**holding and teaching** according to the *Confession of Faith* the corruption of man' s nature as fallen.' Indeed, fallen man is then said to be totally incapable ' unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God unto salvation.'

This means exactly what it says. No fallen human, even if an infant, can ' without the aid of the Holy Spirit...return to God unto salvation.' But at least some (all?), dying young - do!

Lee on ' liberty of opinion' re infants in the Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement

Lee then pointed out that the *Australian Declaratory Statement* next declares (in Article V) ' that liberty of opinion is allowed on matters in the subordinate standard not essential to the doctrine therein taught, the Church guarding against the abuse of this liberty to the injury of its unity and peace.' What does this mean?

Now here, this Article implicitly **denies** ' liberty of opinion' in all ' matters in the subordinate standard...**essential** to the doctrine therein **taught**.' The *Australian Declaratory Statement* thus clearly upholds the authority of the **entire** *Westminster Confession* as a **whole** (1:1 to 33:3). For the so-called ' liberty of opinion' mentioned here, is strictly circumscribed.

This would certainly allow liberty to hold opinions on matters in the *Westminster Confession* - read in the light of the *Australian Declaratory Statement*. Such would be matters which were not prescriptively formulated in either of these two documents.

Thus, Article V of the 1901 *Australian Declaratory Statement* does require compliance with **everything** clearly taught in the *Westminster Confession* - within ' the system of doctrine therein taught.' Yet it grants liberty of **opinion** only in respect of those ' matters in the *Subordinate Standard* not essential to the doctrine therein taught.'

However, though granting liberty of **opinion** in such matters as are not clearly taught in the doctrine of the *Westminster Confession* - the 1901 *Australian Declaratory Statement* grants **no liberty** whatsoever to keep on **expressing** unnecessarily contentious opinions. Particularly is this the situation, wherever this is causing ' injury' to the ' unity and peace' of ' the Church.'

Now whatever the status of the other *Westminster Standards* within the Presbyterian Church of Australia' s State Assemblies (and each or all of their various presbyteries and sessions), the only *Subordinate Standard* of the General Assembly of Australia is the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. It is indeed to be **understood** as explained by the *Declaratory Statement*.

For ' the subordinate standard' of the Presbyterian Church of Australia ' shall be the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, read in the light of the *Declaratory Statement*.' See the *Basis of Union* of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, Section II. Alone, and without the *Westminster Confession of Faith* to fall back on, the *Australian Declaratory Statement* itself would clearly be very deficient - and indeed even often uninterpretable.

The *Australian Declaratory Statement* indeed concedes (in Article V) that ' liberty of **opinion** is allowed on matters in the subordinate standard not essential to the doctrine therein taught' etc. This means that Ministers and Elders in the Presbyterian Church of Australia are at liberty to hold differing opinions about some few matters in the *Westminster Confession*, read in the light of the *Declaratory Statement* - provided those few matters are not essential to the doctrine taught in the *Westminster Confession*, read in the light of the *Declaratory Statement*.

For example. The Declaratory Statement itself maintains (in Article III) that ' it **isnot required** to be held that any who die in infancy are lost.' Thus, Ministers and Elders are personally free to affirm this - or to deny it. Here, either way, what is at stake is not the teaching of the *Westminster Confession* as such - but only a possible interpretation of it which the text of the *Confession* itself does not clearly teach.

However, it is also necessary that any such affirmations or denials under the ' liberty of opinion...allowed' (in Article v) - must be uttered judiciously. Such opinions may certainly be held **in-wardly**. However, if they are also orally or writtenly **ex-pressed**, they must not cause hurtful disharmony in the denomination - ' the Church guarding against the abuse of this liberty to the injury of its unity and peace.' Thus, once again, Article V.

Lee on the Australian Presbyterian [Ordination] Formula regarding infants

Lee went on to explain that the *Australian Declaratory Statement*, and the *Formula for Ministers and Probationers and Elders*, corroborate one another. For they both require loyal **assent** to and **defence** of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.

States the *Australian Declaratory Statement* (in Article II), even ' the doctrine of God' s eternal decree, including the doctrine of election to eternal life, is held as **defined** in the *Confession*.'

Furthermore: the Formula to be **signed** by Ministers, Probationers and Elders at their licensure or ordination or induction - requires them to accept the subordinate standard [alias the *Westminster Confession*] ' as an exhibition of the sense in which I understand the Holy Scriptures.'

Holy Scripture alone, because infallible, is thus the unamendable **supreme standard**. The *Westminster Confession* - though amendable - is the sole subordinate standard. While safeguarding against misinterpretations, the *Australian Declaratory Statement* upholds the *Westminster Confession*.

Indeed, the *Westminster Confession* (10:3 & 28:6) rightly declares that "elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth.... The grace promised is not only offered but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto."

The *Australian Declaratory Statement* (II-V) is quite correct that "the doctrine of God' s eternal decree including the doctrine of election to eternal life is held as defined in the *Confession of Faith* Chapter III.... God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.... None are saved except through the mediation of Christ and by the grace of the Holy Spirit Who worketh when and where and how it pleaseth Him....

"Accepting the *Subordinate Standard*, it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost.... Liberty of opinion is allowed on matters in the subordinate standard not essential to the doctrine therein taught, the Church guarding against the abuse of this liberty to the injury of its unity and peace."

Indeed, the Presbyterian Church of Australia's *Formula to be signed by Ministers and Probationers and Elders* - rightly requires the following declaration:

"I own and accept the [*Westminster Confession of Faith* as the] *Subordinate Standard* of this Church, with the explanations given in the articles contained in the *Declaratory Statement*, as an exhibition of the sense in which I understand the Holy Scriptures and as a confession of my faith.... I promise that through the grace of God I shall firmly and constantly adhere to the same, and to the utmost of my power shall in my station assert, maintain and defend the doctrine...of this Church."

Lee on the everlasting destiny of aborted and miscarried fetuses

Before the end of the nineteenth century, especially in third world countries, most people who ever lived - also died before the end of their babyhood. The advent of modern medicine, however, then very drastically reduced the huge infant mortality rate.

Yet at the end of the twentieth century, man' s appreciation of the value of human life has again become cheap. In several countries, there are already more abortions than live births.

In addition, some estimate that perhaps seventy percent of all pregnancies miscarry during the first week. If, however, as we ourselves believe, everlasting human existence indeed commences at conception - the eternal destiny of all who die young becomes especially critical.

Now Holy Scripture teaches that an everlasting image of God comes into being the moment a human being is conceived. Psalm 51:5*f* & Zechariah 12:1. It certainly seems also to teach that all who die before their birth, enter into the presence of the Lord. Indeed, it seems their condition in the hereafter is better than that of those who live longer and healthier lives. Job 3:1-19*f*; Ecclesiastes 4:2*f*; 6:3-5; 7:1; 11:5*f*; 12:1*f*.

Also Ezekiel 16:20*f* makes it plain that the tiny infants murdered and offered alive as sacrifices by their ungodly parents, are themselves among God' s very elect. For He Himself there calls them: "My children." Thus even the Apostle Paul - while comparing himself to one born prematurely - insists that he was **elect**. First Corinthians 15:8 and Titus 1:1.

Among patristic documents, the *Didachee* and the *Epistle to Diognetus* plainly condemn abortion as a wicked sin. Yet the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the *Vision of Paul* make it clear that even though aborting parents, unless they repent, will spend eternity in hell themselves - all their aborted infants at death go straight into everlasting glory.

Summary of own view on the salvation of early-dying infants

In this last chapter, we have given our own view on the salvation of early-dying infants. Here, we saw that Scripture looks favourably on the everlasting destiny of early-dying children. So too does the *Presbyterian Church of Australia Declaratory Statement*.

Article I of the *Australian Declaratory Statement* seems to cover them under Christ' s atonement. In fact, Article II seem to indicate that God' s predestinated "salvation is sufficient for all and adapted to all and offered to all."

Article III argues "it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost." Article IV teaches the ability of the Holy Spirit to save corrupt man (also from infancy onward) - even in spite of the fallen character of human nature. Article V' s "liberty of opinion" certainly re-inforces Article III. Indeed, it also suggests that the Church will guard against the abuse of this liberty to the injury of its unity and peace - such as it may well need to do, if some vociferously teach that many or even only some dying infants are definitely lost.

All this is re-inforced by the *Presbyterian Church of Australia' s [Ordination] Formula* Consequently, one can feel very comfortable about the everlasting destiny not just of the early-dying infants of both the godly and the ungodly, but also about that of the aborted or miscarried fetuses even of ungodly adults.

XII. SUMMARY: CAN BABIES OF LOST INFIDELS THEMSELVES BELIEVE?

We have seen above that the *Westminster Standards* strongly teach the Biblical doctrines of original sin and predestination. Yet they nowhere teach the damnation of any dying in infancy. We believe the same is true of the Holy Bible. In this final summary, we therefore again ask: can the dying babies of infidels themselves believe?

Firstly, we shall summarize the teaching of the Old Testament - and secondly, the New Testament teaching - on the everlasting destination of the early-dying infants of infidels. Thirdly, we shall summarize the similar views of the Early Christian Church - noting, however, the very different and subsequent view of the Mediaeval Church.

Fourthly, we shall summarize the further differences in the shifts to the views of the initial Reformer. Fifthly, we shall present the views of Calvin - on the subject of the early-dying infants of infidels.

Sixthly, we shall give a summary of the similar teachings of the *Westminster Assembly* - and then of the developments thereafter. Seventhly, we shall then summarize some of the views presented in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries - on the subject of the eternal destination of the early-dying infants of infidels.

The Old Testament on the early-dying infants of infidels

In the Old Testament, Holy Scripture teaches the everlasting damnation neither of the infants who drowned during the flood; nor of the descendants of Ham; nor of the babies incinerated together with all of the adolescent and adult Sodomites. Nor does the Bible ever teach that any early-dying infants of the Egyptians at the time of the Exodus themselves went to hell.

Indeed, Holy Writ seems to assert the extremely strong possibility of all early-dying infants - though each conceived in sin and all shapen in iniquity - nevertheless getting justified. This is particularly striking in the inspired passages Job 3:1-19 *cf.* 19:25-27 & James 5:11.

Significantly, the "little ones" of the Shechemites and the children of Korah and of the Midianites and of all the far-off pagans (with the exception of only the nearby Amelekites *etc.*) - were all exempted even from the purely temporal holocausts inflicted on them by the Israelites. Hence, *a fortiori*, this suggests they would probably (through God-given personal faith in the Christ-to-come) be exempted also from the divinely-ordained and everlasting punishment depicted by those temporal holocausts.

While the ungodly family of Achan was indeed wiped out, nothing is said of the infants thereof suffering eternally thereafter. Similarly, regarding Hiel' s punishment for the sin of trying to rebuild Jericho, the Holy Scriptures are silent as to the everlasting destiny of his children. On the other hand, the entire family of Rahab - the ex-paganistic former prostitute - was spared.

In the book of Ecclesiastes (4:2f & 6:3-5 & 7:1 & 11:5), early-dying human fetuses seem to enjoy a better quality of happiness and rest in the hereafter than do many who die after a full and a wealthy life. This is clearly taught by Rev. Dr. Matthew Henry, and also reflected in the various commentaries of Rev. Professor Dr. Franz Delitzsch and Rev. J. Kok.

The early-dying child of the ungodly Jeroboam, in which child "some good thing toward the Lord God" was found, was given a decent burial. Elijah revived the dead child of the Sidonian widow. Moreover, Elisha revived the dead child of the Shunammite - after she had told him it was "well" with that dead child. Indeed, God spared even the temporal lives of the infants of heathen Nineveh when their paganistic parents repented (and when those infants themselves came to faith in Jehovah?).

Jeremiah calls the babies of apostates: 'innocent' infants. Also in Ezekiel, God Himself calls such babies 'My children' - and indicates they will no way suffer everlastingly just because of the grievous sins of their parents. Indeed, Zechariah seems to predict that Christ would turn His hands in mercy - to the little ones of apostate adults (thus Calvin).

The New Testament on the early-dying infants of infidels

Also the Newer Testament seems to imply that the incarnation of Jesus Christ sanctifies all early-dying infants. For God sent His Son not to condemn but to save the World. Also Calvin exempts infants from the Johannine wrath of God. Indeed, the elect Apostle Paul compares himself even to an aborted or miscarried human fetus - alias a prematurely-born and fully-human baby.

The Lord Jesus Christ healed even the very 'dog-like' little daughter of the Canaanite woman. He said nothing about any everlasting punishment for the threatened children of the wicked Jezebel of Thyatira. Indeed, at the final judgment, He implies that also the "small" (including the 'tiny') will be found written in the Lamb' s book of life.

In both Old and New Testament times, many Pagans often aborted their fetuses - and also slaughtered their own babies. Other Pagans subjected their infants to rites deemed to cleanse them *ex opere operato*.

Only from the time of Cyprian (about 250 A.D.), was the Church herself to some extent progressively paganized - after being invaded by the heathen falsehood of baptismal regenerationism. That was the case especially from the fifth century onward.

The Pre-Reformed Church on the early-dying infants of infidels

Before then, the uniform anti-abortionist stance of the Early Church suggests the favour of God Himself toward the aborted babies of the ungodly. The *Shepherd of Hermas* for instance - suggests the postmortal bliss of all infants. Indeed, also the *Apocalypse of Peter* portrays aborted infants in glory - condemning their own wicked mothers in hell.

Yet, quite apart from the abortion issue, the early Church seems to have assumed the universal salvation of all dying in infancy. Certainly, the Early Post-Apostolic Church knew nothing of infant damnation. Thus, the (*circa* 120*f* A.D.) Christian Apologist Aristides clearly believed that the early-dying infants, at least of believers, were justified - regardless of their being baptized or not.

Also more than a hundred years after the sacramentalistic Cyprian, there were still some very famous dissenters. Gregory of Nyssa sent early-dying unbaptized babies to a place of happiness. Gregory Nazianzen felt unbaptized infants could be saved. The *Vision of Paul* still put aborted fetuses in glory (and their murderous parents in hell). Indeed, even Augustine and Leo - themselves in over-reaction against Pelagianism - did **not always** totally condemn the unbaptized to damnation.

Perhaps to some extent under the influence of (Semi-)Pelagianism, the Mediaeval Church at least in the West developed the doctrine of a joyless and painless Limbo - for early-dying unbaptized babies. This was then perfected by Romanist Scholastics - like Lombard, Bonaventura, Aquinas, Dante and (the later) Bellarmine.

The Reformers on the early-dying infants of infidels

Luther utterly rejected Limbo, and strongly taught the possibility of infant faith. However, he denied that all - and was rather unclear as to whether any -- unbaptized babies will be saved.

Later Lutherans vacillated on the issue. Zwingli, however, clearly taught the possibility of prebaptismal infant faith - and indeed also the salvation of all dying in infancy. So too did Bullinger and Musculus.

Calvin rightly maintained the Augustinian doctrine of the universal imputation of Adam' s sin. At the same time, he often speaks of clemency toward the early-dying infants even of the wicked. He does so in his *Commentaries* and his *Institutes*. He also upholds prebaptismal grace in his writings against the Anti-Calvinistic Gnesio-Lutherans such as Westphal and Heshusius. Indeed, he champions God' s merciful sovereignty toward the infants of the wicked - in his writings against the anti-predestinarian Castellio and the Anabaptist Servetus (who wrongly taught the universal damnation of all dying in infancy).

Although some of the Early Protestant Anglicans somewhat vacillated on the matter, Bishop Hooper and Cranmer' s chaplain the Calvinist Becon taught the salvation of the early-dying infants even of Turks and Heathens. Also Bullinger' s 1566*Second Swiss Confession* - very influential in Britain - insisted that "God can illuminate whom and when He will, even without the external ministry."

John Craig' s 1580*Second Scots Confession* opposed Romanism' s "cruel judgment against infants dying without baptism." The 1618*f Decrees of Dordt* insisted that God "is merciful to whom He wishes," and that He has "revealed these things to little children." Indeed, it insisted that "godly parents should not doubt the election and salvation of their children whom it pleases God to call out of this life during their infancy" -and flatly denied (as alleged by

critics) that Calvinists teach children are "torn guiltless from their mothers' breasts and tyrannically plunged into hell."

Westminster and thereafter on the early-dying infants of infidels

Reflecting on Dordt' s denial that early-dying children are "plunged into hell," Rev. Dr. Twisse - the Moderator of the Westminster Assembly - stated that, were he to be so minded, he could not "devise a greater show and appearance of cruelty" than that. Predictably, Twisse' s *Westminster Confession* therefore insisted that all "elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved" - and that "the grace promised is...conferred by the Holy Ghost to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto."

The Puritan Dr. Thomas Manton left the infants of unbelievers to God - while insisting that babies can, and need to, believe in Christ (Hebrews 11:6). Also Rev. Dr. John Owen had "no doubt...God taketh many unto Him...whose parents...had been despisers of the Gospel."

It is alas true that the non-calvinistic ' hypercalvinist' Wigglesworth taught the damnation of some dying in infancy. Yet his contemporary, the famous Calvinist Dr. Matthew Henry, seems to have taught the very opposite - and the great 'Rock of Ages' Calvinist Augustus Toplady clearly taught the salvation of all dying as infants.

This was also always taught by America' s leading Presbyterian College, Princeton Theological Seminary. Thus the Alexanders, Ashbel Green, the Hodges, Shields and Warfield. Thus too the conservative Calvinists Harris, Russell, Bethune, Candlish, H.J. Van Dyke, G.L. Prentiss, Dabney, and Shedd.

Kuyper, and especially Bavinck - though amenable to this view - were not quite so definite. However, the Southern Presbyterian Professor Rev. Dr. Girardeau - and the Australian Presbyterian Rev. Professor Dr. Rentoul - were outspokenly favourable toward it. So too was the 1882 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria* in Australia.

The twentieth-century Church on the early-dying infants of infidels

The 1901 *Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement*, wisely states "it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost." The 1903 *American Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.*, however, very unwisely insists "that all dying in infancy...are regenerated."

So too did the Southern Presbyterian Rev. Luther Link. Significantly, however, even the ' universalinfant salvationists' B.B. Warfield and R.A. Webb and S.G. Craig - all disapproved of the overly-confident PCUSA formulation.

Cautiously confident were the Presbyterians Rev. Drs. A.G. Fairchild, D. M' Conoughty, J.W. Stagg, W.E. Schenck, Philip Schaff, L.B. Schenck, Loraine Boettner, and J. Oliver Buswell Jr. Although also the Baptists Alvah Hovey and Augustus H. Strong were confident anent the

salvation of early-dying infants even of unbelievers, the Baptist Norman Fox went astray on the issue - and other Baptists such as David Kingdon are perilously pessimistic.

As shown by the present writer (Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Nigel Lee), there is indeed an excellent formulation of the teaching of Holy Scripture anent the salvation of the early-dying infants of unbelievers. That useful formulation is tersely stated anent the *Westminster Confession* (as its own subordinate standard) by the conservative 1901 *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*.

This insists that "the doctrine of God' s eternal decree including the doctrine of election to eternal life is held as defined in the Confession of Faith Chapter III Section I... God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance....

"None are saved except through the mediation of Christ and by the grace of the Holy Spirit... It is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost... Liberty of opinion is allowed on matters in the subordinate standard not essential to the doctrine therein taught."

Hence, at least within the Presbyterian Church of Australia, there is liberty of opinion personally - to assert, or alternatively to doubt, the salvation of the early-dying infants of unregenerate and even of non-elect parents. But there is no liberty to require other Christians to believe that any infantly-dying children of unbelievers are either lost or saved - even though practically all Calvinists have believed the latter. Nor is there, at least within the Presbyterian Church of Australia, any liberty to doubt and still less to deny the salvation of any infantly-dying children with at least one godly Christ-professing parent.

Conclusions on the early-dying infants of infidels

We are now across the threshold of the twenty-first century - with its spate of abortions and miscarriages. Accordingly, we should certainly draw the following conclusions.

Firstly, baptism is only for those who themselves seem to believe in Jesus. Secondly, only those infants who (by God' s grace and through personal faith) already certainly seem to belong to Christ - should be baptized. Thirdly, no infant is baptizable at all - unless at least one (natural or adopting) parent professes the Christian faith. Fourthly, even if both parents profess the true faith - no dying infant at all should in any circumstances ever be baptized.

Fifthly, every living infant of at least one Christ-professing and communicant parent - should be baptized precisely while yet a baby. Sixthly, all early-dying infants of at least one believing parent should be deemed regenerate - even if never baptized. Seventhly, the mercy of God is such that certainly some and probably all dying unbaptized in infancy - regardless of the faith or alternatively the infidelity of their parents - are themselves timeously regenerated, and thus after early death certainly go straight to Heaven.

Compare: Genesis 3:15f; 6:18f; 17:7-14; 18:19-26; 34:25-29; Exodus 4:24-26; Numbers 31:17f; Deuteronomy 20:10-19; Second Samuel 12:14-23; Job 3:1-19f; First Kings 14:1-13; Psalm 8:2f; Ecclesiastes 4:2f; 6:3-5; 7:1; 11:5f; Ezekiel 16:20f & 44:7; Hosea 6:7; Jonah 4:11;

Zechariah 13:7; and Malachi 2:10-14; 3:1f; 4:4-6. See too: Matthew 18:1-14; 19:13-15; Mark 16:16; Luke 1:15f,41-44; 18:15f; John 3:14-18; 12:32; Acts 2:38f; 8:36f; 10:2-48; 11:15-18; 16:15; 16:31-33; 18:8; Romans 4:11-13f; 5:15-19; 6:1-5f; First Corinthians 1:2-17 & 3:1-6 & 7:14 & 12:13 & 15:8 & 16:15; Colossians 2:11-13; James 2:13; First Peter 3:20f; Revelation 7:2-10; 12:17; 14:1; 20:12; 21:24-26; 22:2-4.

"The disciples came unto Jesus, saying: ' Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?' Matthew 18:1.

"Then Jesus called a little child unto Himself...and said: ' Truly I say to you [disciples], unless you keep on being converted and become like little children - you shall not keep on entering into the Kingdom of Heaven.... Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones who believes in Me, it were better for him that...he were drowned in the deep sea....

"' For the Son of man came to save the lost.... So, then, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones - should perish!' " Matthew 18:2-14.

VARIOUS IMPORTANT APPENDICES

(Note: After the Endnotes, the page numbers referred to are those of the 224pp. first edition)

ENDNOTES

- 1) *Westminster Confession of Faith (W.C.F.)* 3:1-3..... 2) *Ib.* 3:3-6..... 3) *W.C.F.* 6:1-3.
- 4) *Ib.* 10:1.3..... 5) *Ib.* 14:1,3..... 6) *Ib.* 19:1..... 7) *Ib.* 25:1-2..... 8) *Ib.* 28:4.
- 9) *Westminster Larger Catechism (W.L.C.)* 166..... 10) Eccl. 7:29.
- 11) Gen. 3:16f; 5:1f; 6:5-12; 8:21f; Job 14:4f; 15:14f; 25:4f; Ps. 51:5f; Eph. 2:1f.
- 12) Eccl. 12:3:21f; 10:3f,9f; 12:1-14; Mk. 9:42-48; Rev. 20:10-15; 21:8,27; 22:11-15.
- 13) His own word here, is "vreemd" (Afrikaans). See *Die Kerkbode* (alias "The Church Messenger"), D.R.C. Publishers, Cape Town, 6th May 1970, p. 630.
- 14) König's rendition: „dat Christus Sy bloed vir die **kinders** van die gelowiges vergiet het” *etc.*
- 15) König: „[het Christus] Sy bloed tog vir die wêreld vergiet, sekerlik ook vir die **kinders** van die **heidene**.”
- 16) F.D. Bruno: *Catholic Belief*, Burns & Oates, London, 1884, pp. 56f. This means, claims Rome, that unbaptized persons cannot get to glory. However, they might get to painless limbo and thus escape everlasting punishment.
- 17) A.H. Strong: *Systematic Theology*, Pickering & Inglis, London, 1956 ed., pp. 662f; F.P. Möller: *The Sacrament Under Siege*, A.G.S. Publishers, Johannesburg, 1956, pp. 76f.
- 18) Rom. 4:3..... 19) Gen. 3:14f..... 20) Gen. 3:14-16 & 4:25f *cf.* Rev. 12:4-17.
- 21) Gen. 2:17; 3:16,19; 4:8,14,25; 5:5,8,14 *etc.*; Rom. 5:12-18; I Cor. 15:21f.
- 22) Rom. 5:12 *cf.* Hos. 6:7..... 23) Rom. 5:17..... 24) Rom. 5:18ff..... 25) Rom. 6:23.
- 26) Eph. 2:1-2..... 27) Eph. 2:3..... 28) Eph. 4:13..... 29) Tit. 1:15.
- 30) Gen. 4:1 *cf.* 4:25f & 5:3f..... 31) Gen. 6:1-4..... 32) Gen. 6:5..... 33) Gen. 6:12f.
- 34) Gen. 7:23 & Heb. 11:7..... 35) Gen. 6:5-12; 7:1; 8:21; I Pet. 3:19-21; II Pet. 2:5 & 3:6.
- 36) Gen. 8:21..... 37) Gen. 9:18-27 *cf.* Acts 8:27 & 10:1f.
- 38) Gen. 6:18f & 9:1-11f; Ex. 20:5; Isa. 59:21.....

39) Gen. 14:18f; Ps. 110; Heb. 5:12 to 7:22..... 40) Gen. 14:14; 15:2f; 16:1-16 & 17:10-27.

41) Gen. 18:23-25..... 42) Gen. 18:20-32 & 19:13-25; Lk. 17:29,32; Jude 7.

43) II Pet. 2:6; Jude 7; Rev. 21:27 & 22:15..... 44) Gen. 34:25-29..... 45) Job 1:1f.

46) Job 3:1-3; 4:1f & 5:7; 12:1f; 14:1-4; 15:1,14,16; 25:1-6..... 47) Job 29:1f & 31:33.

48) Job 1:1f.....

49) J. Calvin: *Sermons of Maister John Caluin upon the Booke of Job*, Geo. Bishop, London, 1574, pp. 47f.

50) Job 3:1-3 *cf.* 4:1f & 5:7..... 51) Job 12:1f & 14:1-4..... 52) Job 15:1,14,16.

54) Job 25:1-6..... 55) Job 19:1,25f..... 56) Ex. 11:5-7 & 12:12,27,29..... 57) Ex. 12:12.

58) Ex. 20:5 & Dt. 5:9.

59) Num. 14:19,29,31,33 & Dt. 1:39 *cf.* Ezk. 18:12 to 20:18 & I Cor. 10:1-11.

60) Num. 16:29-33 & 26:9f..... 61) Num. 16:32..... 62) Num. 16:27.

63) Num. 26:10f..... 64) Num. 25:1f.

65) Num. 31:3,7,15-18. Heb.: *taf*, post-toddler child or children. See n. 67 below.

66) Rev. 2:12-14 *etc.*

67) The statement in Num. 31:17 ("kill every male among the post-toddler children") is our attempt to translate the Hebrew phrase: *hirc@ kal-z-k-r b~taf*. The latter word *taf* (post-toddler children) -- here used in its *in pausa* form (*taf*) -- can hardly apply to just-weaned children, and still less to unweaned babies. Here, as in Ex. 12:37 (*cf.* Ex. 12:26f & Lk. 2:40f), it probably refers to those approaching or even attaining the age of puberty. Incidentally, such older children alone -- just like the slain fornicating adult females, but quite unlike the unslain pre-toddler females who could not and did not fornicate -- would be quite capable of themselves actively participating in fornication.

68) Dt. 25:17f..... 69) Dt. 20:13f..... 70) Dt. 20:13f..... 71) Dt. 31:10-13.

72) Dt. 20:16f & 25:17f..... 73) Josh. 2:12-19; 6:22-24; Heb. 11:31.

74) Josh. 2:1-25 & 6:17-25 and Heb. 11:31.

75) Josh. 6:26 *cf.* I Kgs. 16:24. See too n. 485 below..... 76) Josh. 7:24f.

77) Josh. 8:22..... 78) Josh. 10:30,40..... 79) Ps. 51:5..... 80) Ps. 58:3.

- 81) I Kgs. 14:1,3,10-13..... 82) I Kgs. 16:34 *cf.* Josh. 6:26.
- 83) I Kgs. 17:9-24 *cf.* Lk. 4:26..... 84) II Kgs. 4:17-37.
- 85) Jonah 3:2-10 & 4:11 *cf.* Lk. 11:29-32..... 86) Isa. 11:6-9.
- 87) Isa. 13:1,19 & 14:19-25 and *cf.* J. Calvin's *Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah* (14:21). Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1947, I pp. 451f.
- 88) Isa. 57:5..... 89) II Chr. 33:21-25 *cf.* 34:1-2..... 90) Jer. 1:1-2..... 91) Jer. 2:1f,34f.
- 92) Jer. 19:3-4.
- 93) See J. Calvin's *Commentaries on the Prophet Jeremiah* [19:1-5] and the *Lamentations*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948f, II pp. 434f
- 94) Jer. 22:28-30..... 95) I Chr. 3:17.
- 96) J. Calvin: *Commentaries on the Prophet Ezekiel* (16:36), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948f, II p. 141.
- 97) Ps. 137:7-9..... 98) 13:7-8..... 99) Ezra 9:2 *cf.* Neh. 9:2 & I Cor. 7:14.
- 100) Mal. 2:14f.
- 101) Jh. 1:9-13. *Ho phrōisei panta anthrōpon erchomenon eis to Kosmon.* Chrystostom, Euthymius, Jerome's *Vulgate* and the *Authorised Version* all take the word *erchomenon* here to be referring to the word *anthrōpon* (which is indeed its immediate antecedent). Some would even go on to equate those thus coming into the World, with infants -- and would claim that the latter too are even then "born [again]...of God" (*ek Theou egenn th san* in verse 13).
- 102) Mt. 3:7..... 103) Gen. 3:14-15a *cf.* I Jh. 3:9-12..... 104) Mt. 16:1-4.
- 105) Mt. 23:37f..... 106) Mt. 8:11f & 21:43 *cf.* 3:9f..... 107) Jh. 3:1-8..... 108) Jh. 3:16.
- 109) Jh. 3:18 & 3:36..... 110) Lk. 12:42-48 *cf.* Mt. 24:42-51.
- 111) Mt. 15:24f *cf.* 10:6 & Mk. 7:26f..... 112) Mt. 18:6-12..... 113) Lk. 19:9f.
- 114) Lk. 23:28f..... 115) Mt. 28:19 & Mk. 16:16..... 116) Acts 2:38-40.
- 117) Acts 16:31f; 16:15; 18:8; I Cor. 1:16 & 16:15..... 118) Rom. 1:18.
- 119) Rom. 2:12f..... 120) Rom. 2:23..... 121) Rom. 5:12,18..... 122) Rom. 6:23.
- 123) Rom. 9:11-13 & Heb. 12:16f..... 124) Rom. 11:16-23 & I Cor. 7:14.

- 125) I Cor. 15:20f..... 126) Eph. 2:3..... 127) I Jh. 2:12f & 3:2,9-12.
- 128) Rev. 2:18-23..... 129) Rev. 20:12 & 21:24-27..... 130) W.C.F. 10:3.
- 131) W.C.F. 33:1..... 132) I Cor. 1:13-17 & Rom. 2:28f with Col. 2:9-13.
- 133) S.M. Jackson' *Infant Baptism*, art. in Schaff-Herzog's *Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge* (hereinafter termed *SHERK*), Funk & Wagnall, New York, 1891, II p. 1079.
- 134) The *Didachee* 1:1-2; 2:1-2f & 5:5f ; the *Epistle of Barnabas* chs. 19f ; the *Epistle to Diognetus* [from 'Math t s' ¶h. 5; the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Peter* 25 (compare Clement of Alexandria' *Eclogia* 48); Justin Martyr' *First Apology* chs. 18,27,29,31; Athenagoras' *Apology* ch. 35; Tertullian' *Apology* ch. 9 and his *On the Soul* ch. 37; Minucius Felix' *Octavius* ch. 30; Clement of Alexandria' *Epistle* 36; and Hippolytus, in the *Edinburgh Series of the Ante-Nicene Fathers* (hereinafter called the *ANF*) VI p. 345.
- 135) Cited in (Dr. & Mrs.) J.C. Willke' *Handbook of Abortion*, Hiltz, Cincinnati, 1971, p. 88.
- 136) The (314 A.D.) Council of Ancyra, can. 21.....
- 137) *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (hereinafter called *NPNF*), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1971, pp. iii & 3.
- 138) *NPNF* XIV pp. 256; and Presbyterian Church in America' *Report in the 1978 General Assembly Minutes* p. 276.
- 139) Citation from Willke' *sup. cit.*, p. 88. See too Basil' *Epistles* 188:8,11 & 189:33 & 217:52; and his *Canons* 2. Also note the apocryphal *Vision of Paul* 20; Jerome' *Epistle* 22 (to Eustachium); Chrysostom' *Homily* 24 on Romans (13:14); Augustine' *On Marriage and Concupiscence* 1:15, and his *Questions on the Heptateuch* (on Ex. 21:22-25); and John Cassian' *First Conference of Abbot Theonas* chs. 4 & 32, in his *Conferences* -- all in *NPNF*.
- 140) See B. Schmid' *Manual of Patrology*, Herder, Freiburg, 1899, pp. 75ff; and *The Apostolic Fathers*, Heinemann, London, 1959, ii & p. 3 (K. Lake' s translation).
- 141) *Shepherd of Hermas* III:9:16 & 29.
- 142) See J.J. Müller' *New Testament Apocryphals*, National Bookroom, Cape Town, 1959, p. 128.
- 143) The apocryphal *Apocalypse of Peter* 25 (cf. too Clement of Alexandria' *Eclogia* 48).
- 144) *Ist Ap.*, ch. 18..... 145) Theodotus: *Excerpts* 7,5,58.
- 146) Irenaeus: *Against Heresies* II:22:4 & III:18:7 & IV:6:7 & V:15:3.....
- 147) Clement of Alexandria' *Ec.* 41 & 48 & *Stromata* II:9; and his *Paidog.* I chs. 5 & 6.

- 148) Spanheim Jr *Opera* III:1173f:22 -- as cited in B.B. Warfield *The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation*, Christian Literature Co., New York, 1891, pp. 40ff.
- 149) Cyprian: *Epistle* 55(58):6..... 150) Cyp.: *Ep.* 58(64):2-6..... 151) Cyp.: *Ep.* 73(74):6-11.
- 152) Lactantius: *Divine Institutes* VI:20..... 153) *Ib.* IV:15.
- 154) Gregory of Nyssa: *On Infants' Early Deaths*, in *NPNF* V pp. 372-81.
- 155) Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, Christian Literature Co., New York, 1897, pp. 145f.
- 156) Basil: *On the Spirit* 10:26f..... 157) Hilary: *On the Trinity* IX:9 & XII:57.
- 158) S.M. Jackson *op. cit.*, in *SHERK* II p. 1079.
- 159) Gregory of Nazianze: *Oration on Holy Baptism* (40:18,28ff).
- 160) *Vision of Paul* 26 & 40..... 161) S.M. Jackson *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II p. 1079.
- 162) *Cited in Warfield's Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, pp. 26f.
- 163) Ambrose: *On the Holy Spirit* 18:138..... 164) Amb.: *Concerning Repentance*.
- 165) Amb.: *Epistles* LXIII:63..... 166) Amb.: *On Abraham* 11.
- 167) Chrys.: *Instructions to Catechumens* I:2-3.
- 168) Chrys.: *Homilies on First Corinthians* III:6 (on I Cor. 7:14).
- 169) Chrys.: *Homilies on Second Corinthians* II:9 (on II Cor. 1:6f).
- 170) Aug.: *On Two Souls* (against the Manichaeans) 12:16.
- 171) Aug.: *Retractions*, cited in *NPNF*, 1st Ser., IV p. 104 n. 1.
- 172) *NPNF*, 1st Ser., IV p. 104 n. 1.
- 173) Aug.: *On Baptism Against the Donatists* IV:23:31.
- 174) Aug.: *Three Answers to the Letters of Petilian the Donatist* II:102:231.
- 175) See Aug.: *On Free Will* III:23.
- 176) See Aug.: *Against Julian* V:11 (para. 44, tom. x, f. 651) & IV:23. See too his *Sermon 14*, and his *Epistles* 186:27 [c. 8]. Both cited in P. Schaff *History of the Christian Church*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1970, III p. 432 & n. 2 and p. 836 n. 2. "*Si enim quod de Sodomis ait...alius alio tolerabilius in die iudicii punietur; quis dubitaverit parvulos non baptizatos,*

qui solum habent originale peccatum, nec ullis propriis aggravantur, in damnatione omnium levissima futuros?"

177) Aug.: *Confessions* I:7:11f..... 178) Aug.: *City of God* XIII:7

179) Aug.: *On Holy Virginity* 48..... 180) Aug.: *On Continence* 18.

181) Aug.: *Enchiridion* chs. 43,46,93.

182) Aug.: *Against the Letters of Petilian* I.ii, n. 232; and his *In Ioa.* tr. iv 13. Both cited in J.P. Murphy *The Sacrament of Baptism*, Burns Oates & Washbourne, London, 1929, p. 29. Comp. too Warfield *sDev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 8 & +: "Augustine expressed the Church-doctrine moderately, teaching of course that infants dying unbaptized would be found on Christ's left hand and be condemned to eternal punishment, but also not forgetting to add that their punishment would be the mildest of all.... They were to be beaten with so few stripes, that he [Augustine] could not say it would have been better for them not to be born.... Augustine's doctrine is most strongly expressed in *Serm. xiv* and in *Peccat. Merit.* c. 21 (xvi).... In *Contra Julian* V:11, he speaks of the comparative mildness of the punishment."

183) Aug.: *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins and on the Baptism of Infants* I:16,18f,21,24f,28. "*Potest proinde recte dici, parvulos sine baptismo de corpore exeuntes in damnatione omnium mitissima futuros.*" See too his *Ep.* 186:27.

184) *Op. cit.* I:34f,40f.....

185) *Ib.* II:41f & III:7. "*Manifestum est, eos [parvulos] ad damnationem, nisi hoc eis collatum fuerit, pertinere. Non autem damnari possent, si peccatum utique non haberent.*"

186) Aug.: *On Forgiveness of Sin and Infant Baptism* III:1f.

187) Aug.: *Treatise on Nature and Grace against Pelagius*, chs. 4-5.

188) Aug.: *On Original Sin* II:36:31, II:37:32 & II:44:39. "*Unde ergo recte infans illa perditione punitur, nisi quia pertinet ad massam perditionis?*"

189) Aug.: *On Marr. & Concup.* I:22:20 & II:56:33. "*Remanet originale peccatum, per quod sub diaboli potestate captivi sunt, nisi inde lavacro regenerationis et Christi sanguine redimantur et transeant in regnum Redemptoris sui.*"

190) Aug.: *On Soul & Orig.* II:14:10f..... 191) *Ib.* III:12:9

192) Schaff *op. cit.* III p. 825; and S.M. Jackson *op. cit.*, in *SHERK* II p. 1079.

193) Thus the (418 A.D.) *Decrees of the Synod of Carthage*, can. ij. Cf. (419 A.D.) *African Code* can. 110, Greek cxii bis. In *NPNF* XIV pp. 496f. The above words from "If anyone should say" onward, though found here in a very ancient *Codex*, do not occur in the Greek of Dionysius, nor in Isidore. See too Schaff *op. cit.* III p. 482 n. 3.

- 194) Aug.: *Serm.* 249. Cited in K.R. Hagenbach *History of Christian Doctrine*, Clark, Edinburgh, 1880, II pp. 72-75.
- 195) Aug.: *Tractate LXVII:3 on the Gospel of St John* (on Jh. 14:1-3).
- 196) Aug.: *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, II:7f & III:5.
- 197) Aug.: *On Grace and Free Will*, chs. 44[22] & 45[23].
- 198) Aug.: *On the Psalms* [Ps. 48:5] (Lat. 47:5).
- 199) Warfield: *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1897, pp. 137f.
- 200) F.N. Lee: *Baptism Does Not Cleanse!* (Whitefield Theological Seminary, Lakeland Fla., 1990). See too the lengthy chapter on Augustine in F.N. Lee's Dr. Sac. Theol. dissertation *Rebaptism Impossible!* (Whitefield Seminary, 1991).
- 201) Op. cit., III p. 835f.... 202) See at our n. 108 above.
- 203) Aug.: *City* (as cited in Schaff *op. cit.* III p. 835).
- 204) Pelagius: *Quo non eant, scio; quo eant, nescio.* So cited in Hagenbach *op. cit.* p. 74. See too S.M. Jackson *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II p. 1079.
- 205) See in Aug.: *On Orig. Sin* ch. 21, and his *On the Merits of Sin* I:18 (see our n. 183).
- 206) Aug.: *Against Two Lett. Pelag.* IV:4.
- 207) B.V. Miller *The Fall of Man and Original Sin*, Burns Oates & Washbourne, London, 1928, pp. 85. See too Alcimus Avitus *To Sister Fascina*; Fulgentius *On Faith to Peter* ch. 27; and Gregory the Great *Exposition of Job* 1:16 - all mentioned in Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 8.
- 208) Leo the Great: *Sermons* XXXI:III & XV:11(10) and *Epistles* 16:6
- 209) Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 12..... 210) *Op. cit.* I p. 255 & V pp. 670f.
- 211) S.M. Jackson *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II pp. 1079f.
- 212) "*Baptismus institutus est contra vulnus originalis peccati.*" Alanus ab Insulis (Alain de Lille): *Against Heresies* I:39,43 (Migne 210:345,347)
- 213) Hugo of St Victor: *Summa* V:6 (Migne 176:132).
- 214) "*Divinae justitiae aequitas perpetualiter eos consolidat, ut nec proficiant, nec deficient, ne laetentur, nec tristentur; sed semper per sic uniformiter maneamt.*" Bonaventura: *Sentences* II:33:2:3 (Peltier's ed. III:419). Bonaventura does, however, perhaps also seem to

have believed that unbaptized infants in limbo could somewhat favourably be influenced by the prayers of the earthly saints. See our text at n. 225 below.

215) Duns Scotus: *Sentences* IV:4:3:3 (Paris ed. XVI 406,410).

216) Schaff: *Church History* V pp. 757-60.

217) "*Pueris non adest spes beatae vitae.*" T. Aquinas: *Supplements* p. 1223. Also see his *IV Sent.* I ii dist. xxx q. II, a.2, ad 5va. Consult too his *Summa Theol.* Pt. iii q. lxxviii.2; Suppl. q. lxxi.7.

218) Schaff: *op. cit.*, V p. 759

219) "*Per baptismum pueri liberantur a peccato originali et ab inferno.*" Aquinas: *Summa* III:57:7 (Migne *Patrologia Latina* IV:485f).

220) "*Baptismus qui est regeneratio hominis in vitam spiritualem.*" Aquinas: *Summa* III:66:9; 67:9; 72:1 (Migne IV:617,626,646,678).

221) "*Omne peccatum per baptismum tollitur.*" Aquinas: *Summa* III:69:1 (Migne IV:652).

222) *Ib.* III:68:1 (cited in Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 22).

223) "*Duol senza martiri,*" mental but not physical pain. Dante Alighieri *Inferno* IV:28. Thus Schaff *op. cit.* VIII p. 556.

224) L. Boettner: *Roman Catholicism*, Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co., Philadelphia, 1962, p. 190.

225) Cited in Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 12f & nn. 22 (and W. Wall *History of Infant Baptism*, University Press, Oxford, 1862 ed., II p. 218).

226) Cited in Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 9.

227) Cited in *ib.*, p. 19.

228) Cardinal Cajetan: *Thomas Third Part*, 268 Arts. 1 & 2, as cited in Wall *op. cit.* II pp. 218f. See too Murphy *op. cit.* pp. 31 & 80.

229) Cited in *ib.*, p. 17f & nn. 22.

230) R. Bellarmine: *On the Lack of Grace* 6:6. See too in Schaff *Creeds of Christendom*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1983 ed., I p. 379 n. 1. There, Schaff cites Bellarmine's statement that the *limbus infantum* is "*in loco inferni altiori ita ut ad eum ignis non perveniat.*"

231) Cited in Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 10.

- 232) S.M. Jackson' *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II pp. 1080. See too Sfondrata' *sMode of Predestination*, Rome 1696; and his posthumous *Two of the Most Erudite Dissertations Against Heretics on the Baptism of Infants*.
- 233) Murphy: *op. cit.* pp. 32 & 80..... 234) B.V. Miller' *op. cit.* pp. 84f.
- 235) D.A. Vonier: *The Angels*, Burns Oates & Washbourne, London, 1928, pp. 50f.
- 236) Warfield' *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, p. 13..... 237) *Ib.* pp. 64 & 66.
- 238) M. Luther: *The Infernal Evil*, in *The Fourteen [Patron Saints] of Consolation*, 1520, in M. Luther' *Works*, Holman ed., Philadelphia, 1915, I pp. 127f.
- 239) M. Luther: *The Sacrament of Baptism in The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520), in his *Works*, Holman ed., II pp. 219f.
- 240) M. Luther' *Works*, St. Louis ed., XI p. 984. Cited in F. Pieper' *Christian Dogmatics*, Concordia, St. Louis, 1953, III p. 280 n. 44f.
- 241) See H.E. Jacobs' *Introduction to Luther's Treatise on the Holy Sacrament of Baptism* (in M. Luther' *Works*, Holman ed., I pp. 54).
- 242) R. Schnucker' *Augsburg Confession* (1530), in ed. J.D. Douglas' *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1974, pp. 85f; Schaff' *Creeds*, I, pp. 237.
- 243) *Augsburg Confession* (1530-31), art. IX. From the best (1531) Latin text, with English translation by the well-known American Lutheran theologian Rev. Prof. Dr. C.P. Krauth. In Schaff' *Creeds* III pp. 3 & 13.
- 244) *Creeds* I p. 232. Comp. too his *Ch. Hist.* VII p. 712
- 245) M. Luther' *Works*, Muhlenberg ed., Philadelphia, 1931, V pp. 131,272,292.
- 246) Schnucker' *op. cit.* pp. 85f.
- 247) Schaff observes (*Creeds* I p. 235 n. 2): "It is not quite certain whether it was the Altered (1540 *Variata*) or the Unaltered (1530f *Invariata*) [version of the *Augsburg*] *Confession* which Calvin subscribed at Ratisbon (in 1541).... Probably it was the former.... He says that it contained nothing contrary to his doctrine.... He appealed without fear to Melancthon himself as the best interpreter. The Altered edition had appeared a year before, and had been actually used at the previous Conference at Worms." See Stählin' *John Calvin* I p. 236, and O. von Polentz' *History of French Calvinism*, I p. 577 & II p. 62. See too our subsequent ten footnotes.
- 248) Referring back to his first meeting with Philip Melancthon in 1540, Calvin wrote in 1557: "Whosoever shall say that Philip [Melancthon] has added nothing by the labour of

forty years, does great wrong to him individually and to the whole Church.... Philip can no more be torn from me, than he can from his own bowels.... For when more than seventeen years ago we conferred together on this point of doctrine at our first meeting [viz. in 1540], not a syllable required to be changed. Nor should I omit to mention Gaspar Cruciger, who...stood next highest after Philip in Luther's estimation.... He so cordially embraced what [the hyperlutheranistic or Gnesio-Lutheran] Westphal now impugns, that nothing can be imagined more perfectly in accord with our opinions!" Thus Calvin *Last Admonition to Joachim Westphal*, in Calvin *Tracts and Treatises*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1958, II pp. 356f.

249) The 1554 *Expositions of the Heads of Agreement* (of the 1549 *Mutual Consent in Regard to the Sacraments* by H. Bullinger & J. Calvin). See in Calvin *Tracts & Treat.* II pp. 199,221 & 225: "Readers will find in our *Agreement* every thing contained in the *Confession* published at Ratisbon, and called the *Confession of Augsburg*."

250) Also note the 1556 *Second Defence of the Sacraments in Answer to the Calumnies of Westphal*. There, Calvin referred "to us all who subscribe the *Confession of Augsburg*." He insisted "that we comprehended in our *Agreement* what the *Confession of Augsburg* contains." Indeed, he could write that "I agree with the *Confession of Augsburg*" - for "in the *Confession*, as published at Ratisbon, there is not a word contrary to our doctrine." Thus Calvin *Tracts & Treat.* II pp. 261, 276f & 306.

251) In Calvin *Last Admon. to Westph.*, Calvin wrote that "the *Confession of Augsburg* has obtained favour with the pious.... In regard to the *Confession of Augsburg*, my answer is that (as it was published at Ratisbon) it does not contain a word contrary to our doctrine.... There cannot be a more competent interpreter than its author [Melanchthon]." Thus Calvin *Tracts & Treat.*, II pp. 354f. In his 1557 *Letter to Schalling*, Calvin again re-affirmed this: "I do not repudiate the *Augsburg Confession*, to which I willingly and freely subscribed long ago - just as the author himself [namely Melanchthon] interpreted it." It is thus quite clear that Calvin and Melanchthon both "freely subscribed" to the *Confessio Augustana Variata*; that Luther never opposed it; and that it is chiefly the Gnesio-Lutherans who are to blame for fragmenting the Protestant Reformation into mutually-antagonistic formats (viz. respectively Lutheranism and Calvinism).

252) Thus Schaff *Creeds* I pp. 235 & 236 & n. 3.

253) *Augsburg Confession* (1540), art. IX. In Schaff *Creeds* III p. 13f nn. 1 & 2.

254) *Ib.* I pp. 237f, 239 (& n. 4f) and p. 240..... 255) Schaff *Ch. Hist.*, VIII pp. 219.

256) See I.A. Dorner *History of Protestant Theology* I p. 171; and Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) p. 29.

257) Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) pp. 29f.

258) Cited in C.P. Krauth *Conservative Reformation* p. 433; and Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) p. 30.

- 259) Pieper: *op. cit.* III p. 281..... 260) Schaff' *Ch. Hist.* VIII p. 560 & n. 1.
- 261) Schaff' *Creeds* I pp. 240 & 242.
- 262) *Formula of Concord*, heading XII:1 *cf.* XII:1:IV.
- 263) *Saxon Visitation Articles* II,V & VIII..... 264) Art. III:5.
- 265) A. Hunnius' *Questions on Genesis Chapter Seven*; as cited in, and in addition to, Warfield' *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) p. 30.
- 266) *Ch. Hist.*, VII p. 96..... 267) Cited in Warfield' *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) pp. 26f.
- 268) H. Henke' *Georg Calixtus* (II:2:295); A. Calovius' *Repeated Consensus of the Faith of True Lutherans* (1655); F. Buddaeus' *Institutes of Dogmatic Theology* (Lips., 1723, p. 631); E. Loescher' *Select Compendium of the Best Newer Writings on the Condition of Souls after Death* (1735, repub. Becker 1835). All cited in Schaff' *Creeds* I p. 380 n. 2.
- 269) A. Quenstedt: *Systematics* II:1166f. Cited in Pieper' *op. cit.* III pp. 280f.
- 270) Krauth: *Baptism & Infant Salvation*, Lutheran Book Store, Philadelphia, 1874, pp. 83f.
- 271) *Conserv. Ref.* p. 429.
- 272) *Infant Salvation in the Calvinistic System*, Philadelphia, 1874, p. 22.
- 273) Schaff' *Creeds* I pp. vi & 379f, and his *Ch. Hist.* VII p. 712 & n. 2.
- 274) Schaff' *Ch. Hist.* VIII pp. 96f.
- 275) U. Zwingli: *Sixty-seven Articles* (1523), Conclusion 3 (*cf.* also 4). In E.G.A. Böckel' s *Confessions of the Evangelical Reformed Church*, Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1847, p. 6. Cited in Schaff' *Ch. Hist.* VIII p. 96.
- 276) Zwingli' *Confession of Faith* (point 11 under ' fifth'). In Böckel' *op. cit.* p. 47.
- 277) Soon hereafter, however, Zwingli continued illogically: "Hence we dare not thoughtlessly damn those who do not believe, on account of their unripe parents.... They too [apparently meaning precisely the infants of unbelievers] do not yet believe." Here, Zwingli did not seem to understand the need for all of the elect - including those dying in infancy -- to come to faith before they die. Also, consider his following false statement. "The elect...become children of God even if they die before they believe or are called to faith." Compare E. Zeller' *Theological System of Zwingli*, p. 162. This, however, seems to clash against Jh. 3:3f & Heb. 11:6. See too: Schaff' *Creeds* VII p. 371 n. 1 & p. 378 n. 2; and S.M. Jackson' *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II p. 1080.
- 278) Zwingli' *Confession of Faith* (end of point 11).

- 279) Schaff *Creeds* I p. 642 n. 3: "Zwingli was not quite so positive about the salvation of heathen children [as he was about that of the unbaptized early-dying children of Christians], but he declares it at least *probabilius ut gentium liberi per Christum salventur quam ut damnetur*. "
- 280) Zwingli *Works* (1530) IV p. 8..... 281) Zwingli *Works*, 1527, III pp. 427 & 429.
- 282) Zwingli *Works*, 1527, III pp. 427 & 429.
- 283) *Creeds* I p. 378..... 284) *Ch. Hist.* VII p. 712.
- 285) Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) pp. 37f..... 286) *Two Stud.* p. 200.
- 287) *Creeds* I p. 642 & n. 3. The latter note adds: "See the passages quoted by Laurence, pp. 266-267, who agrees on this subject with the Zurich Reformers."
- 288) W. Musculus: *Loci Communes [Common Places]* p. 336. Cited in S.M. Jackson *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II p. 1080.
- 289) J. Calvin: *Commentary upon the Book of Genesis*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1948, I pp. 228f (on Gen. 5:3).
- 290) *Ib.* pp. 238 & 245f (on Gen. 6:1f)..... 291) *Ib.* pp. 247f & 273 (on Gen. 6:5 & 7:17f).
- 292) *Ib.* p. 285 (on Gen. 8:21)..... 293) *Ib.* pp. 487 & 512f (on Gen. 18:23f & 19:24f).
- 294) J. Calvin: *Calvin's Calvinism* Reformed Free Pub. Assoc., Grand Rapids, n.d., p. 115.
- 295) Calvin *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St Peter*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1963, p. 349 (on II Pet. 2:6).
- 296) Calvin *Commentaries on the Epistle of Jude*, Beveridge, London, ed. ca. 1855, p. 349 (on Jude 9).
- 297) Calvin *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965, I pp. 447f (on Mt. 10:14f).
- 298) Calvin *Everlasting Predestination*, in *Works* VIII p. 611. Cited by J.W. Stagg in his book *Calvin, Twisse and Edwards on Universal Salvation of Infants*, Presbyterian Committee on Publication, Richmond Va., n.d. [about 1900], pp. 82f.
- 299) Calvin *Harmony of the Pentateuch*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1948f, I pp. 216f (on Ex. 11:4f).
- 300) Calvin *Commentary on Deuteronomy* (20:13f) in his *Harm. Pent.* III p. 53. Also see Calvin's 118th sermon (on Dt. 20:13f), in his *Sermon on Deuteronomy*, Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1987 rep., p. 725.

- 301) Calvin *Commentaries on Jonah* (3:3,6,8,10) in his *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948ff, III pp. 95f,105,112.
- 302) *Comm. Jonah* (4:10f), in his *Comm. Twelve Minor Proph.* III pp. 142f.
- 303) Calvin *Comm. on Isaiah*, I pp. 385f (on Isa. 11:8f).
- 304) *Ib.* pp. 451f (on Isa. 14:21).
- 305) Calvin *Comm. on Jeremiah*, II pp. 434-40 (on Jer. 19:1-5).
- 306) Calvin *Comm. on Ezekiel* (9:3f), I pp. 306f.
- 307) *Ib.* pp. 120-22 (on Ezk. 16:20f)..... 308) *Ib.* (on Ezk. 16:21).
- 309) J. Calvin: *Selected Works of John Calvin*, ed. J. Bonnet, Baker, Grand Rapids, rep. 1983, VII:73f.
- 310) *Ib.* pp. 213f (on Ezk. 18:1-4).
- 311) Calvin *s Commentaries* on Zechariah (13:7), in his *Comm. Twelve Minor Proph.* V p. 397.
- 312) Calvin *Commentaries on Malachi* (2:15), in his *Comm. Twelve Minor Proph.* V p. 558.
- 313) Calvin *The Gospel According to St. John 1 - 10*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1959, pp. 64f (on Jh. 3:5).
- 314) *Ch. Hist.* VIII p. 557..... 315) *Gosp. Jh. 1 - 10*, pp. 73f (on Jh. 3:16).
- 316) See Calvin *The Gospel According to St. John 11 - 21 and the First Epistle of John*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1961, p. 43 (on Jh. 12:32).
- 317) *Ib.* pp. 75f (on Jh. 3:17f)..... 318) *Ib.* p. 77 (on Jh. 3:19f).
- 319) *Ib.* pp. 85f (on Jh. 3:35f).
- 320) See Calvin *Appendix to the Tract on the True Method of Reforming the Church*, in his *Tracts & Treat.* III pp. 354f.
- 321) J. Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Clarke, London, ed. 1957, IV:16:31f.
- 322) J. Calvin: *Harmony of the Evangelists*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1948f, III pp. 167-69.
- 323) *Ib.* II pp. 262f (on Mt. 15:21f).

324) French: "*quelque goust de pieté et vraye religion.*

325) *Ib.* II pp. 263f (on Mt. 15:22f)..... 326) *Ib.* II pp. 332f (on Mt. 15:2f,10f).

327) *Inst.* IV:14:14..... 328) *Ib.* IV:15:4,15.

329) *The Epistles of Paul to the Romans and Thessalonians*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1961, pp. 48f (on Rom. 2:15).

330) *Ib.* on Rom. 4:9-13

331) The first set of our square-bracketed words are not in the *Textus Receptus* at Rom. 5:18a. Although the second set of our square-bracketed words anent the free gift are not in the *Textus Receptus* at Rom. 5:18b, the idea inherent therein is irrebutably implied. For in the Greek text, the very words expressing the idea of free gift *charisma* and *dooreema* and *doorea* - had just previously been employed in the *Textus Receptus* at Rom. 5:15-17.

332) Calvin *Ep. Rom.* pp. 111f (on Rom. 5:12-17).

333) "*De piorum liberis loquor, ad quos promissio gratiae dirigitur; nam alii a communi sorte nequaquam eximuntur.*" Rom. 5:17. Thus Schaff *sCh. Hist.* VIII p. 558 & n. 2. According to Schaff (*idem*), "in his comments on Rom. 5:17 he [Calvin] confines salvation to the infants of pious (elect) parents, but leaves the fate of the rest more than doubtful." Here, Schaff is inaccurate. Calvin is talking not about the children of the elect but about children of the "godly." Schaff here forgets that even all of the elect are ungodly, until their regeneration! Again, Schaff's words more than (in his expression more than doubtful) are inaccurate and unfortunate. For Calvin here hardly leaves the fate of the rest more than doubtful. Calvin does say that "the others" (alias those other than "the children of the godly") are "by no means exempted from the common lot" - namely the common lot of all of the descendants of the fallen Adam (whether elect descendants, or reprobate descendants). Yet Calvin does not here imply that their fate is more than doubtful (as Schaff wrongly states Calvin did). Indeed, there are elsewhere several comments by Calvin to suggest quite the contrary. See, for example, his comments on Dt. 20, Jonah 4 and John 3 (all given earlier above).

334) *Paul to the Romans*, pp.117f (on Rom. 5:18-20)

335) *Comm. Rom.* (9:5-12) and *Inst.* III:22:4,11 & IV:2:3.

336) Calvin *Comm. Rom.* (11:16-26).

337) Calvin *sThe First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians* (7:14), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, rep. 1968, pp. 148f.

338) *Ib.* (on 15:21f).

339) See our main text at n. 283 above.

- 340) Calvin *Commentaries on Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1965, pp. 139-43 (on Eph. 2:1-7)
- 341) *Inst.* II:13:1f & II:16:7..... 342) *Comm. I Jh.* (3:7-9).
- 343) Calvin *Form for Administering Baptism*, in his *Liturgical Forms* (1542), in his *Tracts & Treat.*, ed. T.F. Torrance, II pp. 998, 113 & 115.
- 344) Calvin *Antidote to the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent*, in his *Tracts & Treat.* III pp. 109f.
- 345) Calvin *sTracts & Treat.* III pp. 346-55 (cf. G. Kramer *sThe Connection Between Baptism and Regeneration*, De Vecht, Breukelen, 1897, p. 122 n. 2).
- 346) Calvin *Second Defence of the Sacraments in Answer to the Calumnies of Westphal and his The True Partaking of the Flesh and Blood of Christ in the Holy Supper* (in his *Tracts & Treat.* II pp. 319f & 336-40 & 496 & 503f & 534f).
- 347) Calvin *sInst.* (II:1:5f), I pp. 214f & p. 216 n. 2. The latter n. 2, representing the last sentence in our citation above, is taken from Calvin's original French: *Les enfants ne descendent point de la generation spirituelle qui les serviteurs de Dieu ont du S. Esprit, mais de la generation charnelle qu'ils ont d'Adam.*"
- 348) *Ib.* II:1:7f..... 349) *Ib.* III:23:7.
- 350) *Ch. Hist.* VIII p. 558 & n. 3.
- 351) *Inst.* III:23 (chapter heading).
- 352) Calvin *The Acts of the Apostles 1 - 13* (10:34), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, ed. 1965, pp. 306f: "All who lead godly and blameless lives, are pleasing to God.... Uncircumcision does not prevent God being pleased with and approving the righteousness in a Gentile man.... The advent of Christ brought [about]...that the dividing wall was destroyed, and God embraced the whole world without distinction (Eph. 2:14)."
- 353) *Inst.* IV:6:6.
- 354) *Ib.* IV:16:17f.
- 355) Calvin *Selected Works*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1983, VIII pp. 73f.
- 356) Calvin (& De Chandieu): *French Confession*, art. X. In Schaff *Creeds* III pp. 365f.
- 357) *Inst.* IV:16:31f.
- 358) *Corpus Reformatorum* VIII:494 (= 8:522 in the Amsterdam ed. quoted in Strong *sup. cit.* p. 663 para. 2).

359) *Ib.*, as cited by Stagg *op. cit.* pp. 105f.

360) Calvin *Defense of the Secret Providence of God* (as cited in Stagg *op. cit.* p. 100); and in Cole *Calvin's Calvinism* Wertheim & Macintosh, 1856 ed., p. 117.

361) Thus the hardline Calvinist Dr. C. van der Waal, in his book *The Decrees of Dordt Do Not Dry Up*, De Jong, Johannesburg, 1973, p. 52. For a different interpretation of this passage, see Schaff *Ch. Hist.* VIII p. 558 & n. 3, and p. 559 n. 3. The less hardline Calvinist Schaff there alleges this proves Calvin believed in the everlasting damnation of at least some early-dying babies. However, even Schaff also admits that Dr. C.W. Shields of Princeton (in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for Oct. 1890) argued herefrom to prove precisely the opposite - *viz.* that Calvin here shows he believed in the salvation of all early-dying infants! See too our main text at n. 364 below. It is true the universal infant salvationist Rev. Prof. Dr. B.B. Warfield himself (wrongly) concluded that "Calvin seems...with admirable caution to imply that he believed some infants dying such to be lost." Yet Warfield also (rightly) conceded that "Calvin is often held to have believed that all infants dying such are saved. For a careful statement of this opinion, see especially the full and learned [paper of Dr. Charles W. Shields] in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for October 1860 (Vol. I pp. 634-651)." See Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.*, 1891, pp. 38f at its n. +.

362) See our main text at nn. 307f & 344 & 354 above

363) *Inst.* IV:16:17-19.

364) Thus the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* Oct. 1890, pp. 634-51 (as cited in Strong *op. cit.* p. 663 para. 2). See too our main text at n. 361 above.

365) Schaff *Creeds* I p. 642.

366) *Ib.* n. 2, citing Cranmer *On Baptism in his Reform of the Law*.

367) J. Hooper *An Answer to My Lord of Winchester's Book* 1547, in the *Early Writings of Bishop Hooper*, pp. 129-31, Parker Society, Cambridge, 1844 (cited in Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* 1891 ed. pp. 33f & n. * and 1897 ed. pp. 190f).

368) Schaff *Creeds* I p. 643.

369) J.H. Blunt: *Dictionary of Doctrinal Theology*, p. 346 n. Cited in S.M. Jackson *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II p. 1080.

370) See in Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) pp. 32f & 38f & 15f.

371) R. Hooker *Ecclesiastical Polity* 1593f, V:9:6.

372) P.M. Vermigli: (*Common Places* pp. 76 & 436) hesitated to ascribe salvation to all early-dying infants. So too Beza, Pareus, Zanchius, Perkins and Maccovius. Thus H. Bavinck *Reformed Dogmatics*, Kok, Kampen, 1930, IV p. 708.

373) It is true that the composer of the *Belgic Confession* (Guido de Brés) issued the following sharp statement about children: "They are all involved under the curse, except the children of believers who are redeemed from such perditions and sanctified and regenerated by God' s gracious acceptance and by the power of the promise and of the covenant." See his *Root, Origin and Foundation of the Anabaptists* (1608 ed., III fol. 256), cited in Kramer' *ſp. cit.* p. 208. It should be noted, however, that even here De Brés does not preclude the possibility of the salvation of the early-dying infants of unbelievers. His emphasis is more upon the necessity of even the early-dying among the elect first being regenerated -- than upon the percentage of the early-dying [49%- or 51%+ or 100%] that are elect. For De Brés was here repudiating the Anabaptist Dierick Philips, who had atrociously alleged that all children throughout the World (including those of Moslems and Pagans) had received Christ - without themselves possessing the Holy Spirit and the Christian faith. See Kramer' *ſp. cit.* pp. 207f.

374) It is true that Ursinus, one of the two authors of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, does state that the infants of believers "are separated from the children of Heathen and Turks" alias Pagans and Moslems. Thus Ursinus' *ſApology of the Catechism*, in his *Works* II:16sq. Apparently speaking of ecclesiastical hypocrites, Ursinus also declared that "infants from ungodly parents...are outside the Church" and possess the "tendency" toward evil. Cf. Ursinus' *Christian Religion* Q. 74 (as cited by Shedd in his *Dogmatic Theology*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, ed. 1969, III p. 449). Even if Ursinus here means the Church Invisible (and not just the Visible Church), that declaration is true of all unregenerates (whether infants or adults) - and to some extent true even of regenerates (though decreasingly so). However, Ursinus does not seem to teach that the early-dying infants even of ungodly parents are themselves necessarily unregenerate and therefore lost. See F.N. Lee' *Die Saligheid van die Vroegsterwende Kindertjies van Ongelowiges [The Salvation of Early-Dying Infants of Unbelievers]*, in *Dutch Reformed Theological Journal*, Stellenbosch, South Africa, March 1971, p. 110.

375) 1566 *Second Swiss Confession* ch. I (cf. Bavinck' *ſp. cit.* IV p. 708 & n. 4).

376) (Ed.) A. Peterkin' *ſBook of the Universall Kirk*, Edinburgh Printing & Publishing, Edinburgh, 1839, pp. 32-42. I am grateful to my friend Rev. Richard Bacon of Dallas, who supplied this reference.

377) *Decrees of Dordt* I:3.

378) *Ib.* I:17.

379) *Ib.*, Rejection of Heresies I:8.

380) *Ib.*, Conclusion. It is true that the Swiss delegates to Dordt, in their private capacity, had stated that "it cannot be denied before the face of God Who loves and hates unborn children [Romans 9:11-13] that there is an election and a reprobation even of infants." *Judicial Acts of the Synod of Dordt* 40. Yet those Swiss delegates did not state that such reprobate infants died in infancy; nor that any who die in infancy, should be deemed reprobate. Indeed, their implicit but very clear reference to God prenatally hating the unborn Esau (before his birth and indeed from all eternity) evidences the contrary. For God predestinated Esau to die only

in adulthood. So too Cain and Ishmael and Judas *etc.* Indeed, nowhere in Holy Scripture is it stated or implied that any of the reprobate die in infancy.

381) See P. Limborch: *Christian Theology* III ch. V:2. See too in Warfield *Imputation*, in his *Biblical and Theological Studies*, Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., Philadelphia, 1952, p. 267.

382) F. Junius: *Works* III:333 (cited in Bavinck *op. cit.*, IV p. 708 n. 5).

383) "*Nolim egare, affirmare non possum.*" G. Voetius: *Disputations*, II:413. See too M. Vitranga *Doctrine*, II:51f. Also Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1897) pp. 143-239 (cited in Bavinck *op. cit.* IV p. 708 & n. 6).

384) Briggs, Henry J. Van Dyke, and possibly too G.L. Prentiss (as cited in Stagg *op. cit.* pp. 118-19).

385) W. Twisse: *The Riches of God's Love unto the Vessels of Mercy consistent with His Absolute Hatred or Reprobation of the Vessels of Wrath*, Oxford, 1653, pp. 109, 169f, 172 & 186 (cf. too pp. 8, 14, 34, 44, 46 & 105 *etc.*). So cited in Warfield *The Confession of Faith as Revised in 1903*, in *Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield - II*, 1973 ed., Presb. & Ref. Pub. Co., Nutley N.J., pp. 378f. See too R.S. Ward *The Bush Still Burns: The Presbyterian and Reformed Faith in Australia 1788-1988*, Wantirna, Vic., 1989, p. 268.

386) See eds. A.F. Mitchell & J. Struthers: *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, Still Waters Revival Books, Edmonton, rep. 1991, pp. 134 & 175f.

387) R. Shaw *The Reformed Faith: An Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith*, Christian Focus, Inverness, 1973, p. 123.

388) A.A. Hodge: *The Confession of Faith*, Banner of Truth, London, 1958 ed., p. 174

389) *Creeds* I pp. 380 & 795.

390) J.B. Green: *Harmony of the Westminster Presbyterian Standards*, Collins, 1971, p. 81.

391) Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) p. 47 & * (and 1897 ed. p. 215).

392) G.H. Clark: *What Do Presbyterians Believe? -- The Westminster Confession Yesterday and Today*, Presb. & Ref. Pub. Co., Philadelphia, 1965, p. 117

393) T. Manton: *Sermon 25* (on Heb. 11:6), in his *Complete Works*, XIV pp. 81f.

394) So cited in J. Owen *Doctrine of the Saints Perseverance* in his *Works* XI (Banner of Truth, London, 1966, pp. 553f). See too Owen *Of Original Sin in his Display of Arminianism* (in his *Works* X pp. 78f). See too his *Works* V pp. 137f.

395) Cited in R.J. Rushdoony *This Independent Republic*, Craig, Nutley N.J., 1964, pp. 42f.

396) Cited in S.M. Jackson *op. cit.* in *SHERK* II p. 1080.

397) M. Wigglesworth [circa 1662] *The Day of Doom or a Poetical Description of the Great and Last Judgment with other Poems*, American News Company, New York, 1867, p. 68 (stanza CVXVI). To render the poem more intelligible, we ourselves have slightly improved its punctuation - F.N. Lee.

398) *Ib.* pp. 72f (stanzas CLXXXI, CLXXX, CLXXXI). See too the last sentence in our n. 397 above.

399) R.J. Rushdoony *The Flight from Humanity - A Study of the Effect of Neoplatonism on Christianity*, Craig, Nutley N.J., 1973, pp. 44 & 33f.

400) See Schaff *Creeds* I p. 379 & n. 1 & p. 794 n. 2f, with his *Ch. Hist.* V pp. 758f.

401) Thus Schaff *Ch. Hist.* VIII p. 560 & n. 3. See too Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891) pp. 61.

402) Turretin(e), as cited by Rev. Prof. Dr. J.L. Rentoul in his Sept. 7th 1881 speech before the Presbytery of Melbourne (in Ward *op. cit.* pp. 264 & 268). See too ed. J.H. Gerstner's *Selections from Francois Turretini's Theological Institute* (Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches, Grandville Mich., 1980, pp. 90 & 94 & 107 & 122) - on IV:13:4,18 & IV:15:9f & IV:17:33.

403) M. Henry: *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, Marshall Bros., London, IV, n.d., pp. 1398 & 1402 (on Jonah chs. 3:5-10 & 4:5-11).

404) As cited in Schaff *Creeds* I pp. 887 n. 2f.

405) In *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1862, p. 258. Cited in Schaff *Creeds* I p. 898 n. 1

406) Schaff *Creeds* I p. 896 n. 1.

407) A.H. Toplady: *Works* [1794], Sprinkle, Harrisonburg Va., 1987 ed., pp. 142f & note (m); pp. 645f; and pp. 47, 49 & 58. In that edition, on p. 143, the word "explicit" has been mis-typeset (exlicit).

408) The great Warfield, giving good reasons, embraces the same view. See his essay *The Angels of Christ's "Little Ones,"* in his *Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield - I* (ed. Meeter), Presb. & Ref. Pub. Co., Nutley N.J., 1970, esp. p. 264.

409) J. Newton: *Works* IV p. 182

410) L. Beecher: *The Government of God Desirable*, Newark, 1805, p. 15n (in Marvin's 1827 Boston ed.).

411) Beecher *Spirit of the Pilgrims*, 1828, I pp. 49 & 81.

- 412) T. Scott: *The Articles of the Synod of Dordt*, Philadelphia, 1818, p. 189.
- 413) A.W. Alexander: *The Life of Archbald A. Alexander*, p. 585 (as cited in Warfield *Two Studies in the History of Doctrine*, The Christian Literature Co., New York, 1897, p. 219).
- 414) A. Green, as cited by N.L. Rice in his art. *Infant Damnation* (in *The Presbyterian Expositor*, June 15th 1858, p. 360). See too L.B. Schenck's book *The Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant: An Historical Study of the Significance of Infant Baptism in the Presbyterian Church in America*, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1940, pp. 81f & n. 8 and p. 119 & n. 1.
- 415) W. Harris: *Grounds of Hope for the Salvation of All Dying in Infancy*, Waugh & Innes, Edinburgh, 1823.
- 416) *Op. cit.*, as cited in A.G. Fairchild's *Are Infants Elected?* (in *The Great Supper*, Presbyterian Board of Pub., Philadelphia, n.d., pp. 131f).
- 417) *Op. cit.* p. 162..... 418) *Op. cit.* p. 161.
- 419) D. Russell *Essay on the Salvation of All Dying in Infancy*, Waugh & Innes, Edinburgh, 1823.
- 420) D. Russell *Infant Salvation or an Attempt to Prove that All Dying in Infancy are Saved*, Maclehose, Glasgow, 1844.
- 421) *Ib.* p. 47..... 422) Russell *Inf. Salv.*, flyleaf & pp. 187f..... 423) *Op. cit.*, pp. 187f.
- 424) T. Boston: *Miscellaneous Questions*, Quest. VI. Cited in Russell *Inf. Salv.* pp. 187f.
- 425) G.W. Bethune *Early Lost, Early Saved; An Argument for the Salvation of Infants, with Consolations for Bereaved Parents*. Mentz & Rovoudt, Philadelphia, 1846; and Board of Pub. of Reformed Dutch Church, New York. See his flyleaf; and also the quotation from Bethune in *Are Infants Saved?* by D. M. Conoughty, Presbyterian Board of Publication Tract No. 132, n.d., pp. 129f.
- 426) J.H. Bockok: *Presbyterian Pastor's Catechism* Presbyterian Board, 1857, Q. 13.
- 427) Schaff *Creeds*, I p. 381 n. 1.
- 428) C. Hodge: *Systematic Theology*, Nelson, London, 1873, I pp. 26f and III pp. 605 (n. 4) & pp. 879f. H.E. Gravemeijer (*Reformed Doctrine of Faith*, Wiarda, Sneek, 1888, III:20 pp. 139n-140n) falsely traces some of these statements of Hodge back: to Schleiermacher; to the Arminian Limborch; and even to Pelagius. However, Gravemeijer neglects to mention that -- unlike those earlier heretics -- the highly-orthodox Hodge believed in Christ's limited atonement for the original sin of all early-dying infants, as well as in their own God-given yet personal infant faith in Jesus.

429) Schaff: *Creeds* I p. 381 n. 1

430) A.A. Hodge' *Conf. of Faith*, p. 175; and his *Evangelical Theology*, Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, ed. 1976, pp. 261 & 401f.

431) See our main text below at n. 445.

432) R.S. Candlish' *The Atonement*, 1861, pp. 183f.

433) R.L. Dabney' *Endless Punishment*, in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, July 1879. See Dabney' *Discussions: Evangelical and Theological - 1*, Banner of Truth, London, ed. 1967, pp. 132-34. Also Dabney' *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1976 rep., pp. 240 & 533.

434) Shedd' *Dogm. Theol.* II pp. 505f, 712, 517 & 714 n. 1 (citing Toplady' *Church of England Vindicated* and A.W. Alexander' *Life of A.A. Alexander* p. 585) and III pp. 517f (of Shedd's *Dogm. Theol.*).

435) H.J. Van Dyke in *The Presbyterian Review*, January 1885, VI:58.

436) Bavinck' *sop. cit.* I pp. 177f. On p. 179, Bavinck identifies "the salvation of all early-dying children" in the 1903 *Declaratory Statement* of the then PCUSA - as "universalism." He rightly mentions that "Dr. R.A. Webb" (Professor at the Theological Seminary at Clarksville [Tenn.]) "opposed" much in that *Declaratory Statement*. See too Webb' *s'1903*" (cited in Warfield' *sThe 1903 Revision of the Confession of Faith*, in his *Select. Short. Writ - II* pp. 400f). But Bavinck wrongly suggests that the highly-orthodox Webb also opposed "the salvation of all early-dying children." Sadly, there seems to be no evidence that Bavinck even knew about, much less read, Webb' s important book *The Theology of Infant Salvation* - in which Webb himself champions the salvation of all dying in early infancy.

437) *Ib.* IV pp. 708f.

438) A. Kuyper Sr.: *E Voto Dordraceno [On the Heidelberg Catechism]*, Wormser, Amsterdam, 1894, III:14 & II pp. 176-78. See too his *Common Grace* (Kok, Kampen, 1911) II pp. 91f; and his *From the Word*, 2nd Series (Kruyt, Amsterdam, 1875), I pp. 37, 237, 340, 345 & 382. Thus Warfield' *s1903 Rev. Conf. Faith* (in his *Select. Short. Writ. - II* pp. 404f & nn. 5-6). Warfield there also further refers to Dabney' *Syllabus and Notes* p. 435; and to Warfield' own art. *Predestination* (in J. Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, Clark, Edinburgh, ed. 1947, IV pp. 62f).

439) A. Kuyper Sr.: *The Herald*, Amsterdam, Sept. 7th, 1890. Compare too Kuyper' *On the Sacraments* p. 148 (in his *Dogmatic Dictations*, IV, Kok, Kampen, 1909). There can be no question that Kuyper believed that not only all early-dying infants of believing parents but also at least some of the early-dying infants of unbelieving parents were regenerated before their own deaths. See note 438 above.

- 440) J.L. Girardeau: *Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism Compared as to Election, Reprobation, Justification and Related Doctrines*, Sprinkle Pub., Harrisonburg Va., 1984 rep., pp. 188, 271f & 369.
- 441) Cited in Stagg *op. cit.* pp. 131f.
- 442) *Act Approving the Confession of Faith of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland*, Aug. 27th 1647, Session 23. See Free Church of Scotland *Subordinate Standards and Other Authoritative Documents*, Church Offices, Edinburgh, 1933, pp. 18f.
- 443) R. Swanton: *The Westminster Confession and the Declaratory Statement*, in *The Reformed Theological Review*, Geelong, Australia, Vol. XLIV, Jan.-Apr. 1985, pp. 15f. Also see R. Swanton *Our Heritage and Destiny*, Victorian Presbyterian Theological Hall, Melbourne, 1975, p. 2.
- 444) Cited in R. Hamilton *Jubilee History of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria*, Melbourne, 1888, p. 403. See Ward *op. cit.* pp. 256f.
- 445) *Ib.* pp. 264f (from a report in the *Argus* newspaper of Sept. 9th 1881).
- 446) *Declaratory Act 1882* of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Preamble and Clauses 1 & 2. Cited in Ward *op. cit.* p. 281.
- 447) *Australian 1901 Declaratory Statement* arts. 2 & 3. Cited in W.M. Bradshaw *Basic Documents on Presbyterian Polity*, Christian Education Committee, Presbyterian Church of Australia, 1984, pp. 93f
- 448) *Op. cit.* pp. 285f.
- 449) *1903 Declaratory Statement of the PCUSA*. See *The Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America - Part I: Book of Confessions*, Office of the General Assembly of the UPUSA, Philadelphia, 1967, pp. 6,176-78.
- 450) S.G. Craig (ed.): *Christianity Today*, Jan. 1931, p. 14. Cited by L. Boettner in his own book *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (1932), Presb. & Ref. Pub. Co., Philadelphia, 1976 ed., pp. 8 & 146f. See too Warfield *1903 Revis. Conf. Faith* (in his *Select. Short. Writ. II*, p. 381).
- 451) Warfield *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891), p. 49
- 452) S.G. Craig *Benjamin B. Warfield - II*, Presb. & Ref. Pub. Co., Nutley N.J., ed. 1973, p. 381.
- 453) Warfield *Two Studies*, pp. 230 & 238f
- 454) Warfield *Predest.*, in Hastings *Bib. Dict.* IV pp. 62f.

- 455) 1903 Revis. Conf. Faith (in *Select. Short. Writ. - II*, pp. 380-92)
- 456) Warfield *Children* (in his *Select. Short. Writ - I*, pp. 224, 228f & 231)
- 457) Fairchild *op. cit.*, footnote on p 131, & pp. 131f.
- 458) M Conoughty *op. cit.*, pp. 62f..... 459) *Ib.*, pp. 63f.
- 460) W.E. Schenck *Children in Heaven or the Infant Dead Redeemed by the Blood of Jesus*, Presb. Board of Pub., Philadelphia, n.d. (ca. 1900).
- 461) L.B. Schenck *op. cit.*
- 462) R.A. Webb: *Calvin Memorial Addresses*, p. 112 (cited in Boettner *Ref. Doct. Predest.* pp. 147f)
- 463) R.A. Webb *The Theology of Infant Salvation*, Presb. Committee of Pub., Richmond Va., 1907.
- 464) *Ib.*, p. 14..... 465) *Ib.*, pp. 23..... 466) *Ib.*, p. 23..... 467) *Ib.*, pp. 313f.
- 468) N. Fox: *The Unfolding of Baptist Doctrine*, p. 24. Cited in Strong *op. cit.*, p. 663.
- 469) A. Hovey *Biblical Eschatology*, pp. 170f (as cited in Strong *op. cit.*, p. 662)
- 470) Warfield: *Are There Few That Be Saved?* (in his *Bib. & Theol. Studies* p. 349 & n. 36).
- 471) *Op. cit.*, pp. 823 & 661f. For the latter statement given in our main text above, Strong cites -- Van Dyke *Christ and Little Children*; Whittsitt and Warfield *Infant Baptism and Infant Salvation*; Hodge *Syst. Theol.*; Ridgeley *Body of Divinity*; Calvin *Inst.*; Krauth *Inf. Salv. in Calv. Syst.*; Candlish *Atonement*; and J.F. Clarke *Truths and Errors of Orthodoxy*.
- 472) Schaff *Ch. Hist.* I p. 470 & II p. 255.
- 473) *Creeds* I p. 380 & n. 3, p. 381 and pp. 794 & 795 nn. 1:2.
- 474) Stagg *op. cit.*, pp. 5-131ff.
- 475) L. Link *Infant Salvation and Confessional Revision*, Onward, Richmond Va., 1912.
- 476) *Ib.*, flyleaf and pp. 80f..... 477) *Ib.*, p. 84..... 478) *Ib.*, p. 81..... 479) *Ib.*, p. 85.
- 480) Tenuously, Link (*op. cit.* pp. 81f) tried to draw an unwarranted pseudo-universalistic conclusion from Lk. 12:48 - about the servant who does not know his Master's will. Link's application of that passage also to infants is very questionable. For he overlooked the following phrase in Christ's statement which immediately adds that even such agnostics shall

still be beaten - though with few(er) stripes. Even more tenuous is Link's application of Acts 17:30 to infant salvation. More appropriate - after the statement in Rom. 2:12 about those who have sinned without law - is his question: "Is it not easy to draw *aufortiori* argument from this to the infant?"

481) *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

482) S.G. Craig (ed.): *Christianity Today*, Jan. 1931, p. 14 (cited in Boettner *op. cit.* pp. 145-47). See too at n. 452 above.

483) *Op. cit.*, pp. 143-49.

484) *Op. cit.*, pp. 116f. Schenck cites Shedd's *Calvinism: Pure and Mixed -- Two Conflicting Systems: A Defence of the Westminster Standards* (New York, 1893, pp. 112-15 & 117). He also cites Warfield's *Dev. Doct. Inf. Salv.* (1891, pp. 6 & 49); J.V. Stevens's *Elect Infants: or Infant Salvation in the Westminster Symbols* (Nashville, 1900, pp. 148-74); N.L. Rice's *Inf. Damn.* (from *The Presb. Expos.*, June 15th 1858, p. 360); and W.L. Nourse's *Calvinism: and Calvinism and Infant Damnation* (in *The Presbyterian Quarterly*, Oct. 1891, Art. VI, pp. 575 & 581-83).

485) D.J. De Groot: *The Rebirth*, Kok, Kampen, 1952, p. 233

486) J.O. Buswell Jr.: *Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1963, II pp. 161, 162 & n. 6, and 171. Buswell refers to Warfield's *Inf. Salv.* in the latter *Studies in Theol.* pp. 411-14.

487) D. Kingdon: *Children of Abraham*, Carey Pub., Hayward Heath, 1975, pp. 64 & 98f.

488) F.N. Lee: *Early-dying Infants* (in *D.R.C. Theol. Journ.* March 1971 pp. 114f).

489) Melbourne: 358 Mountain Hwy, pp. 87f. 490) Mt Albert, Vic: 22 Serpentine St., pp. 76f.

491) F.N. Lee: *I Confess! - Holy Scripture, the Westminster Confession, and the Declaratory Statement: Their Relationship to One Another in the Presbyterian Church of Australia*, Brisbane, 1991, pp. 57-65.

LIST OF BIBLE TEXTS CITED

(Only texts bearing on the dissertation are listed below; the references are to the original hardcopy's page numbers, which not always quite correspond to the electronic version)

Genesis 1:26*f* - pp. 8*f*,10,19,34
2:9*f* - p. 34
2:16*f* - pp. 8*f*,10
3:2*f* - pp. 8*f*
3:8-13*f* - p. 13
3:14*f* - pp. 8,11,15,34*f*,63,93,181
4:1-25 - pp. 13,82,93
5:1-4 - pp. 19,82
5:31 - p. 9
6:1-12 - pp. 16,82*f*
6:18*f* - p. 181
7:1-4*f* - p. 45
9:18-27 - pp. 17,93
10:5 - p. 93
14:18*f* - pp. 17,84
17:6*f* - pp. 11,41,78,181
17:10-27 - pp. 24,41,44,101
18:19-26*f* - pp. 17*f*,84,172,181
19:20-32 - pp. 84*f*
24:3 - p. 81
25:22 - p. 27
26:34*f* - p. 81
27:46 - p. 81
28:1*f* - p. 81
28:22 - p. 84
33:13 - p. 136
34:25-29 - p. 181
35:1-15 - p. 84

Exodus 4:24*f* - pp. 41,181
11:4*f* - pp. 22,87*f*
12:3*f* - pp. 24,84
12:12*f* - pp. 22,84
12:22*f* - p. 93
12:26 - pp. 24,84,184
12:37 - pp. 24,84,184
12:48 - p. 24
20:5 - pp. 22,54,91,93,111,117
23:14-17 - p. 24
34:23-26 - pp. 24,91

Leviticus 27:3-31 - p. 83

Numbers 14:19*f* - pp. 22*f*
14:31 - pp. 142,164
16:27-32 - p. 23
25:1 - p. 23
26:10*f* - p. 23
31:3*f* - p. 23
31:15-18*f* - pp. 18,41,164,171,181
32:17*f* - p. 172

Deuteronomy 1:39 - p. 142
5:9 - pp. 54,91
16:16*f* - pp. 24*f*
20:10-15 - pp. 23,88,171*f*,181
25:17*f* - p. 23
31:10*f* - pp. 23,164

Joshua 2:1-25 - p. 24
6:17-25 - p. 24
6:26 - p. 24
7:24*f* - p. 24

Ruth 4:2 - p. 83

Second Samuel 12:13-23 - pp. 14,44,63,161,171,181

First Kings 14:1*f* - pp. 28,168,171*f*,181
16:34 - p. 28
17:9 - pp. 28,159

Second Kings 4:17-37 - pp. 28*f*,158*f*

Second Chronicles 33:21*f* - p. 29
34:1*f* - p. 29

Ezra 9:2 - p. 32

Nehemiah 9:2 - p. 32

Job 1:4*f* - p. 18
3:1-21 - pp. 18*f*,25*f*,28,176*f*,181
10:3-18*f* - pp. 28,134
14:1-4 - pp. 8*f*,53,57.63,114
15:14-16 - pp. 8*f*
16:1 - p. 64
Job 19:25-27 - pp. 18,21,177
25:4-6 - pp. 8,54
38:41 - p. 134

Psalm 8:2 - pp. 27,172,181
22:9*f* - pp. 6,27
51:4*f* - pp. 6,8*f*,25*f*,54,63,110,176
58:3 - p. 25
104:21 - p. 134
106:36*f* - p. 134
137:7*f* - p. 31
147:9 - p. 134

Proverbs 16:4 - pp. 8*f*
27:1 - p. 28

Ecclesiastes 4:2*f* - pp. 25,27,176,178,181
6:3-5 - pp. 21,25,27*f*,176,178,181
7:1 - pp. 25,27,176,178,181
11:5*f* - pp. 25,27,176,178,181
12:1 - pp. 25,27,176,178,181
12:14 - p. 28

Isaiah 11:6*f* - pp. 29,81,90
13:1*f* - p. 29
14:19*f* - pp. 29*f*,81,90*f*
49:1-5 - p. 27
57:5 - pp. 29,142
59:21 - pp. 11,93,111,117

Jeremiah 1:5 - pp. 27,45*f*
2:1*f* - pp. 30,158
2:34*f* - pp. 30,134,141,158
19:3*f* - pp. 30,81,92*f*,134,141*f*,158
22:28*f* - pp. 30,141
32:18 - p. 91

Ezekiel 9:3*f* - p. 30
16:20*f* - pp. 11,30*f*,93*f*,119,142,176,181
16:36 - pp. 31,142
18:2*f* - pp. 31,94*f*
18:20 - p. 91
44:7 - p. 181

Daniel 12:2*f* - p. 9

Hosea 6:7*f* - pp. 8,34,93,105,181
12:2-4 - p. 27

Jonah 3:2-10 - pp. 29,89,133,142,165
4:1-11 - pp. 29,89,133,142,157*f*,165,181

Zephaniah 2:2*f* - p. 38

Zechariah 12:1 - p. 176
13:7*f* - pp. 32*f*,81

Malachi 1:2-4 - p. 9
2:10-14*f* - pp. 32,181
3:1*f* - p. 181
4:4-6 - p. 181

Matthew 2:16 - pp. 60,63
3:7 - pp. 35,96
4:19 - p. 118
6:31 - p. 135
7:14 - p. 163
10:6 - p. 35
10:15 - pp. 54,70,86
12:41 - p. 89
11:21-25 - pp. 27,44,54,70*f*,86
13:47 - p. 118
15:21-24*f* - pp. 35,100*f*
18:1-14 - pp. 9,11,35,39,63,100,135*f*,137*f*,161,181*f*
19:12-15 - pp. 157,181
21:16 - p. 157
23:33 - p. 96
23:35 - p. 16
24:42*f* - p. 35
25:34*f* - p. 58
25:41 - pp. 8*f*
26:25 - p. 55
28:19*f* - pp. 11,35

Mark 6:11 - p. 86
7:26*f* - p. 35
10:13-16 - p. 157
16:16 - pp. 35,71,73,101,113,181

Luke 1:15 - pp. 27,111,181
1:36-41*f* - pp. 9,27,46,111,181
10:12*f* - pp. 70,86
Luke 10:21 - p. 45
12:42-48 - pp. 14,35,55,93,99*f*,171,181
13:1*f* - p. 70
18:15*f* - pp. 30,44,44,127,157
19:9*f* - p. 35
23:28*f* - p. 35

John 1:9-13 - pp. 9,11,34,39,95,101,137
3:3-16*f* - pp. 9*f*,11,26,35,38*f*,81,96*f*,115,127,131,133,181
3:17-21 - pp. 97*f*
3:36 - pp. 9*f*,35,81,98,133,151
4:2 - p. 46
4:42 - p. 147
5:29 - p. 9
6:64*f* - pp. 9
8:47 - p. 9
10:15 - p. 171
10:26 - pp. 9,171
12:32 - p. 181
17:9-14 - pp. 9,55,171
21:15 - pp. 37,45

Acts 2:21 - p. 14
2:38*f* - pp. 10,36*f*,38,41,44,49,73,127,181
4:12 - pp. 10,162
8:36*f* - pp. 11,181
10:1-48 - pp. 113,135,181
11:13-18 - pp. 113,181
14:1-6 - pp. 41,59,61
13:48 - p. 171
15:18 - p. 8
16:1 - p. 117
16:15 - pp. 36,181
16:31*f* - pp. 36,41,181
17:26 - p. 9
17:30 - p. 197
18:8 - pp. 36,181
20:33 - p. 10

Romans 1:18 - pp. 36,102
2:12*f* - pp. 10,14,36*f*,102,172,197
2:16 - p. 38
2:23-28 - pp. 36,42
3:9-23 - pp. 39,57
4:1*f* - p. 102
4:9*f* - pp. 10*f*,41,101,181,191
Romans 5:12-19 - pp. 8*f*,10,15,36,56,103*f*,191,143,163,167,181,191
6:1-5*f* - p. 181
6:14 - p. 99
6:23 - p. 36
8:2 - p. 10
8:9 - pp. 10,38,127
8:28 - p. 9
9:5-22 - pp. 9,15,36,105,171,191,193

10:9-14 - pp. 14,171
10:17 - p. 100
11:7 - p. 171
11:12 - p. 147
11:16*f* - pp. 11,14,36,50,105,112*f*,118,156
11:26 - p. 93
12:16 - p. 135
14:3-21 - p. 136

First Corinthians 1:2 - p. 41
1:2-17 - p. 36,41*f*,181
1:27 - p. 27
3:1-7 - pp. 41,181
3:22 - p. 136
5:1*f* - p. 117
5:12*f* - pp. 76,130*f*
6:9-12 - pp. 41,117
7:14 - pp. 9,11,14,32,39*f*,41,50,57,81,94,100,106*f*,110*f*,117*f*,171*f*,181
10:1-2 - p. 41
12:13 - pp. 41,181
15:7*f* - pp. 25,176,181
15:20*f* - pp. 9,36,40,78*f*,81,107*f*,115
15:45*f* - p. 9
14:20 - pp. 101,135
16:15 - pp. 36,181

Second Corinthians 4:13 - p. 10
5:10 - p. 38

Galatians 1:15 - p. 27
3:19*f* - pp. 10*f*
4:4 - p. 109
4:19 - p. 114

Ephesians 1:5 - p. 9
1:17*f* - p. 10
2:1-5 - pp. 10,15,37,81,85,108,115,131
2:8 - p. 10

Ephesians 4:4-6 - p. 41

Colossians 2:9*f* - p. 42
2:11*f* - pp. 10*f*,44,44,101,181

First Timothy 5:21 - pp. 8*f*

Second Timothy 1:3-10 - pp. 10,117

Titus 1:1 - pp. 25,176
3:3-7 - pp. 39,59

Hebrews 2:6-9*f* - pp. 34,109
2:13*f* - pp. 81,109,141
2:16*f* - p. 109
5:13*f* - p. 10
10:22 - p. 10
11:1-6 - pp. 9,13,16,39,56,127,129*f*,180
12:16*f* - pp. 36,81,171

James 1:17*f* - p. 37
2:13 - pp. 37,145,181
5:11 - pp. 166,177

First Peter 1:10-23 - pp. 16,37,83
2:2 - pp. 10,37,135
3:18-22 - pp. 16,37,45,83,181
4:6 - pp. 16,37,45,83
5:1*f* - pp. 37

Second Peter 2:4 - p. 8
2:5 - pp. 16,37,45,83
2:6 - p. 85
3:9 - p. 153

First John 2:12*f* - p. 37
2:18 - pp. 9*f*
3:2-12 - pp. 16,35,37,81*f*,109
5:12 - pp. 9*f*,38,127,151,162

Jude 7 - p. 85

Revelation 2:18*f* - p. 37
7:3-9 - pp. 93,130,138,146,181
12:17 - p. 181
14:1 - p. 181

Revelation 14:10-13 - pp. 9,18*f*,22,25
20:10-15 - pp. 9,37,150,181
21:8 - p. 9
21:12 - p. 181
21:24*f* - p. 9
21:27 - pp. 117,181

Revelation 22:2-4 - pp. 93,181
22:14*f* - p. 9

INDEX OF BIBLICAL PERSONS CITED

(only those mentioned here which were discussed at some length)

Abel - pp. 15*f*
Abijah - p. 24
Abraham - p.17*f*,84
Achan - p. 24
Adam - pp. 6,8*f*,18,82,161
Amon - p. 29
Assir - p. 30

Barnabas - p. 42
Bildad - p. 20

Cain - pp. 15*f*, 82
Canaan - p. 17

David - p. 6,161

Elijah - p. 159
Eliphaz - p. 20
Elisha - p. 158*f*
Esau - p. 86
Eve - p. 8
Ezekiel - p. 30
Ezra - p. 32

Ham - p. 17
Herod - p. 63
Hiel - pp. 24,28
Isaiah - pp. 29*f*

James - p. 37
Jeconiah (and his son Assir) - p. 30
Jeremiah - pp. 30,45
Jeroboam - p. 28
Jesus - pp. 6*f*,13,34*f*,44,59
Jezebel and her children - p. 38
Job pp. 6,18*f*,32
John the Apostle - pp. 37*f*
John the baptizer -p. 27
Jonah - p. 29
Josiah - p. 29

Melchizedek - pp. 17,60
Moses - pp. 16*f*

Nehemiah - p. 32
Nicodemus - p. 35
Ninevites, The - pp. 29,32,89
Noah - pp. 16*f*,83*f*

Paul - pp. 8,36*f*
Peter - pp. 8,36*f*,83*f*

Rahab - pp. 24,32

Samuel - p. 51
Seth - pp. 15*f*
Shechem - p. 18
Shem - p. 17
Shunammite woman and her child, The - p. 28
Sidonian lady and her child, The - p. 28
Solomon - p. 25
Syrophenician woman, The - pp. 35,100

Zaccheus - p. 35
Zechariah -- p. 32

INDEX OF OTHER PERSONS CITED

(only those mentioned here which were discussed at some length)

- Alanus ab Insulis (Alaine de Lille) - p. 65
Alcinus Avitus - p. 63
Alexander, Rev. Prof. Dr. A. - p. 140
Amort - p. 66
Aristides - p. 178
Athenagoras - p. 42
Augustine - pp. 42,52f,64f,186
- Bacon, Rev. Dr. R. - p. 193
Basil - pp. 42,50
Bavinck, Rev. Prof. Dr. H. - pp. 146,195
Beattie - p. 128
Becon, T. - p. 123
Beecher, Rev. Dr. L. - pp. 128,138f
Bellarmine, Cardinal - p. 66,187
Bethune, Rev. Dr. G. - pp. 143,157
Beza, Rev. Prof. Dr. T. - p. 123
Bianchi - p. 66
Blunt, J.H. - p. 123
Bockok, Rev. Dr. J.H. - p. 143
Boettner, Prof. Dr. L. - pp. 166f
Bonaventura, Cardinal - p. 65,187
Boston, Rev. Dr. T. - p. 142
Breckenridge, Rev. Dr. R.J. - p. 155
Buddaeus - p. 76
Bullinger, Rev. Prof. Dr. J.H. - pp. 79, 124f
Burns, Robbie - p. 160
Buswell Jr., Rev. Prof. Dr. J.O. - p. 168
- Cajetan, Cardinal - p. 66
Calixtus - p. 76
Calovius - p. 76
Calvin, Rev. Prof. Dr. J. - pp. 19f,81-121,150f,158f,160,191f
Candlish, Rev. Prof. Dr. T.S. - pp. 144f,151
Cassender - p. 66
Cassian - p. 42
Castellio - pp. 119f
Chandieu - p. 117
Chrysostom - pp. 42,184
Clark, Rev. Prof. Dr. G.H. - p. 129
Clarke, J.F. - p. 196
Clement of Alexandria - pp. 42,45
Craig, J. - p. 124
Craig, Rev. Dr. S.G. - pp. 154f,165f

Cranmer, T. - p. 123
Curcellaeus - p. 124
Cyprian - pp. 30,47*f*

Dabney, Rev. Prof. Dr. R.L. - p. 145
Dante Alighieri - p. 65
Davidson, Rev. Prof. Dr. A.D. - p. 21
De Brés, G. - pp. 124,192*f*
De Groot, Rev. Prof. Dr. D.J. - p. 168
De la Marne - p. 66
Delitzsch, Rev. Prof. Dr. F. - pp. 21,26*f*
Dick, Rev. Prof. Dr. R. - p. 128
Dickson, D. - p. 128
Diognetus - p. 42
Dionysius - p. 186
Doddridge, P. - pp. 132*f*
Dorner, Rev. Prof. Dr. J.A. - p. 74
Duns Scotus - p. 65

Edwards, Rev. Prof. Dr. J. - pp. 163*f*
Euthymius - p. 184

Fairchild, Rev. Dr. A.G. - pp. 157*f*
Farrar, Canon F.W. - p. 150
Flaccius (Matthias Illyricus Vlacic) - p. 75, 112
Fletcher, Rev. Prof. J.W. - p. 137
Fisk, Rev. Prof. Dr. W. - p. 137
Fox, G. - p. 130
Fox, N. - p. 160
Fulgentius - p. 63

Gerhard - p. 76
Gerson - p. 65
Girardeau, Rev. Prof. Dr. J.L. - p. 148
Goodwin, J.G. - p. 130
Gousset - p. 67
Gravemeijer, Rev. Dr. H.E. - p. 195
Green, Rev. Prof. Dr. A. - p. 141
Green, Rev. Prof. Dr. J.B.. - p. 129
Gregory Arimensis - p. 66
Gregory of Nazianze - p. 51
Gregory of Nyssa - p. 48
Gregory the Great - pp. 63*f*

Harris, Rev. Dr. W. - pp. 141*f*
Henry, Rev. Dr. Matthew - pp. 25*f*,133*f*
Hermas, The Shepherd of - p. 42

Heshusius - pp. 74, 112*f*
Hilary of Potiers - pp. 50*f*
Hinckmar - p. 64
Hippolytus - p. 42
Hodge, Rev. Prof. Dr. A.A. - pp 128,144,149*f*
Hodge, Rev. Prof. Dr. C. - pp 143*f*,149,195
Hoffmann - p. 74
Hooker, Rev. Dr. R. - p. 123
Hooper, Rt. Rev. Bp. Dr. H. - p. 122
Hovey, Rev. Prof. Dr. A. - p. 160
Hugo of St. Victor - p. 65
Hunnius - pp. 74*f*
Huss - p. 65

Irenaeus - pp. 44*f*
Isidore - p. 186

Jackson, Rev. S.M. - p. 42
Jerome - pp. 42*f*,184
Johnson, Rev. Prof. Dr. T.C. - p. 164
Junius, Rev. Prof. Dr. F. - pp. 125,130,146
Justin Martyr - p. 42*f*

Kingdon - pp. 6,161,169
Klee - p. 66
Knox, John - p. 94
König, Rev. Prof. Dr. A. - p. 14
Kok, Rev. J. - p. 27
Krauth, Rev. Prof. Dr. C. - pp. 77,164
Kuyper Sr., Rev. Prof. Dr. A. - pp. 146*f*

Lactantius - p. 48
Lee, Rev. Prof. Dr. F.N. - pp. 171*f*,193
Leo the Great - p. 63
Leydecker - p. 164
Link, L. - pp. 164*f*,197
Limborch - p. 124
Loescher - p. 77
Lombard, Peter the - p. 64
Luther, Rev. Prof. Dr. M. - pp. 70*f*

Maccovius, Rev. Prof. Dr. J. - p. 123
McEachran, D.S. - p. 150
M' Conoughty, Rev. Dr. D. - p. 158
Macpherson, Rev. Dr. J. - p. 128
Manton, Rev. Dr. T. - pp. 129*f*

Melancthon, Rev. Prof. Dr. P. - pp. 73*f*
 Miller, Rev. Prof. Dr. B.V. - p. 67
 Minucius Felix - p. 42
 Mitchell, Rev. Prof. Dr. A.F. - p. 128
 Morecraft III, Rev. Dr. J.C. p. 1
 Morgan. See: Pelagius
 Münzer, T. - p. 73
 Murphy, Rev. Prof. Dr. J.P. - p. 67
 Musculus - p. 79

Newton, J. - pp. 138*f*
 Newman, Cardinal - p. 57

Origen - p. 77
 Owen, Rev. Dr. J. - pp. 130*f*,146

Palmer, H. - p. 127
 Pareus, Rev. Prof. Dr. D. - p. 123
 Pelagius - pp. 56*f*,62*f*
 Perkins, Rev. Prof. Dr. W. - p. 123
 Perrone - p. 66
 Petavius - p. 66
 Philips, D. - p. 193
 Pieper, Rev. Prof. Dr. F. - p. 74
 Pighius - p. 85
 Prentiss, Rev. Prof. Dr. G.L. - p. 164

Renkema, Rev. Dr. W.B. - p. 21
 Rentoul, Rev. Prof. Dr. J.L. - pp. 145,150*f*
 Rice, Rev. Dr. N.L. - pp. 155,168
 Ridgeley - p. 196
 Rushdoony, Rev. Dr. R.J. - p. 132
 Russell, Rev. Dr. D. - p. 142

Schaff, Rev. Prof. Dr. P. - pp. 60*f*,64,72*f*,75*f*,78,128,143*f*,161*f*,164
 Schenck, Rev. Prof. Dr. L.B. - pp. 167*f*
 Schenck, W.E. - p. 158
 Schleiermacher, Rev. Prof. Dr. F. - p. 195
 Scott, Rev. Dr. T. - pp. 138
 Sellon - pp. 137*f*
 Servetus - p. 118
 Sfondrani, Cardinal - p. 67
 Shaw, Rev. Prof. R. - p. 128
 Shedd, Rev. Prof. Dr. W.G.T. - pp. 145*f*,166*f*,193
 Stagg, Rev. Dr. J.W. - pp. 163*f*
 Stephens, Rev. Dr. J.V. - p. 164
 Stewart, J.C. -- pp. 149*f*,154

Strong, Rev. Prof. Dr. A.H. - pp. 160*f*
Strong, Rev. Dr. C. - pp. 149*f*

Tertullian - pp. 42,46*f*
Theodotus - pp. 42*f*
Thomas Aquinas - pp. 64*f*
Toplady, A.H. - pp. 137*f*
Turretini, Rev. Prof. Dr. F. - pp. 133,151
Twisse, Rev. Dr. W. - pp. 125*f*,151

Ursinus, Rev. Prof. Dr. Z. - pp. 124,193

Van der Waal, Rev. Dr. C. - p. 192
Van Dyke, Rev. Dr. H.J. - p. 146
Vermigli, Rev. Prof. Dr. P. - pp. 123
Voetius, Rev. Prof. Dr. G. - pp. 125,146
Vonier, Rev. Prof. Dr. D.A. - p. 68

Waldo and the Waldenians - p. 65
Ward, Rev. Dr. R.S. - pp. 150,154,169
Warfield, Rev. Prof. Dr. B.B. - pp. 50,66,74,76,79,128,155*f*,160,186,192
Webb, Rev. Prof. Dr. R.A. - pp. 158*f*,195
Wesley, J. - pp. 136*f*
Westphal, J. - pp. 75,112*f*
Whedon, Rev. Dr. D.D. -- p. 133
Whitaker, J. - p. 127
Wigglesworth, M. - pp. 6,131*f*
Wilkinson, Rev. Prof. Dr. T. - pp. 169*f*
Wilson, J.P. - p. 155
Wycliffe, Rev. Prof. Dr. J. - pp. 65,68

Zanchius, Rev. Prof. Dr. J. - p. 123
Zwingli, Rev. Prof. Dr. U. - pp. 77,277

INDEX OF SUBJECTS CITED

(only those mentioned here which were discussed at some length)

- Abortion - pp. 42f,61
Ai - p. 24
Amelekites --pp. 23f
Ancyra, Council of - p. 42
Anabaptists - pp. 72,74f,112f,118,128,151
Angels - pp. 13f
Anglicanism - p. 122
Arminianism - pp. 124f,130f,146,165f
Augsburg Confession (Invariata) - pp. 72,74,188
Augsburg Confession (Variata) - pp. 73,188f
American Presbyterian Declaratory Statement - pp. 6,154f
Australian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement - pp. 6,38f,153f,172f
Australian Presbyterian Ordination Formula - p. 175
- Baptismal regenerationism - pp. 47f,50f,57,78f,101,110f,118f
Barnabas, Epistle of - p. 42
Babylon, children of - p. 31
Belgic Confession - pp. 124,192
- Chalcedon, Council of - p. 42
Conception - p. 34
Constance, Council of - pp. 65f
Constantinople, Council of - p. 42
- Decrees of Dordt* - pp. 119,172,124,193
Declaratory statements - p. 149
Didachee, or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles - pp. 42f
Diognetus, Epistle to - p. 42
Dominicans - p. 64
Donatism - p. 53
- Edom, children of - p. 31
Egyptians - pp. 22f
Election - p. 10
Elvira, Synod of - p. 42
Ephesus, Council of - p. 42
- Fetuses - pp. 26f
Flood, The Great - pp. 16,82f
Florence, Council of - pp. 65f
Fore-ordination - p. 9
Franciscans - p. 64
French Confession - p. 117

Gnesio-Lutheranism - pp. 75f

Heidelberg Catechism - p. 124

Hell - pp. 55,66,87,115

Hermas, Shepherd of - p. 42

Infant damnation - pp. 8,66f

Infant death (prenatal) - pp. 20, 124,126f,177f

Infant faith - p. 10,90,95f,115f,118f,129f

Infanticide - p. 42

Infants, mercy toward - pp. 48,**84-100**,115,119

Infants of apostates or infidels - pp. 14,48,59,77f,85f,90f,92f,117,123f

Infants, revelations to - pp. 45,95,126f

Infants, universal salvation of - pp. 48,77,**132-46**,148,**154-68**

Innocents - pp. 30,48

Limbo - pp. 58f,64f

Lyons, Council of - pp. 65f

Midianites - p. 23

Miscarriages - pp. 25f

Ninevites, The - pp. 29,32,89

Original sin - pp. 62f,82f

Paul, Vision of - pp. 41,51

Pelagian(ism) - p. 53

Peter, Apocalypse of - pp. 42f

Postmillennialism - pp. 156,160f

Princeton, Old - pp. 140f

Saxon Visitation Articles - pp. 75f

Scots Confession, Second - p. 124

Semi-Pelagianism - p. 63

Sodom(ites) - pp. 17f,84f

Swiss Confession, Second - p. 124

Trent, Council of - pp. 64f

Victorian Presbyterian Declaratory Statement - pp. 149f

Westminster Assembly - pp. 125f

Westminster Confession of Faith - pp. 8f,38f,126f,144f,151f,162,169,172f

Westminster Larger Catechism - p. 146

Wrath of God - pp. 98,102f,108f

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acts of Paul, The.

Acts of Paul and Thecla, The.

Acts of Peter, The.

Ante-Nicene Fathers, The (ANF), I-X. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1969.

Apocalypse [or Revelation] of Peter, The.

Augsburg Confession, 1530 & 1540.

Augustine: *On Baptism Against the Donatists.* In *NPNF (q.v.)*.

Augustine: *On the Baptism of Tiny Children.*

Augustine: *On the Forgiveness of Sins and Infant Baptism.* In *NPNF (q.v.)*.

Augustine: *The Lord's Sermon on the Mount.*

Basil: *Against Eunomius.*

Baxter, R.: *More Proofs of Infants Church Membership and consequently their Right to Baptism.* 1675.

Becon, T.: *Catechism (1560).* Cambridge: Parker Society. Ed. 1844.

Becon, T.: *Prayers and Other Pieces.* Cambridge: Parker Society. Ed. 1844.

Beecher, L.: *Spirit of the Pilgrims.* 1828.

Beecher, L.: *The Government of God Desirable.* Newark. 1808.

Bellarmino, R.: *On the Lack of Grace.*

Berkouwer, G.C. & Toornvliet, G. (eds.): *The Doctrine of the Church.* Groningen: Haan. 1949.

Bethune, G.W.: *Early Lost, Early Saved - An Argument for the Salvation of Infants with Consolations for Bereaved Parents.* Philadelphia: Mentz & Rovoudt. 1846

Boettner, L.: *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination.* Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co. Ed. 1976.

Bomberger, J.H.A.: *Infant Salvation in its Relation to Infant Depravity, Infant Regeneration and Infant Baptism*. Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston. 1859.

Bradshaw, W.M.: *Basic Documents on Presbyterian Polity*. Sydney: Christian Education Committee, Presb. Church of Australia. 1984.

Bullinger, H.: *The Origin, Developments, Sects, Increase, Aims and Common Doctrines of the Anabaptists*. Zurich. 1561.

Burgess, C.: *The Regeneration of Elect Infants [as] Professed by the Church of England*. Oxford: Curteyn. 1629.

Calvin, J.: *Brief Instruction for Arming All the Good Faithful Against the Errors of the Common Sect of the Anabaptists*. In his *Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines* (q.v.).

Calvin, J.: *Calvin's Calvinism* Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association. N.d.

Calvin, J.: *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*. I-IV. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Ed. 1947.

Calvin, J.: *Commentaries on Jonah*. In his *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets* (q.v.).

Calvin, J.: *Commentaries on the First Twenty Chapters of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*. I-II. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Ed. 1948f.

Calvin, J.: *Commentaries on the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations*. I-V. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1948f.

Calvin, J.: *Commentaries on Zechariah*. In his *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets* (q.v.).

Calvin, J.: *Defence of the Secret Providence of God*.

Calvin, J.: *God's Everlasting Predestination* In his *Works* (q.v.).

Calvin, J.: *Harmony of the Pentateuch* (I-IV). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1948.

Calvin, J.: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. I-II. London: Clarke. 1957.

Calvin, J.: *Opera Selecta*. Munich: ed. P. Barth & W. Niesel. 1926-36.

Calvin, J.: *Refutation of the Errors of Michael Servetus*. In Calvin's *Works* (q.v.).

Calvin, J.: *Sermons of Maister John Caluin on the Booke of Job*. London: Geo. Bishop. 1574.

- Calvin, J.: *Tracts and Treatises*. I-III. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1958.
- Calvin, J.: *Treatises against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines*. Grand Rapids: Baker. Ed. 1982.
- Candlish, R.S.: *The Atonement*. 1861.
- Candlish, R.S.: *The Sacraments*. Edinburgh: Clark.
- Chrystostom, J.: *Baptismal Catecheses*. Ed. Wenger. 1955.
- Clark, G.H.: *What Do Presbyterians Believe? - The Westminster Confession Yesterday and Today*. Philadelphia: Presb. & Ref. Pub. 1965.
- Clement of Alexandria: *Eclogia*. In ANF (q.v.).
- Clement of Alexandria: *Protrepticus*.
- Cocceius, J.: *On the Covenants*. I-IV.
- Cole, E.: *Calvin's Calvinism* Wertheim & Macintosh. Ed. 1856.
- Coleburn, C.: *Scriptural, Confessional and Historical References re the Regeneration of Children, and their Status before the Lord and in the Church*. Brisbane. 1991.
- Commendation of the Westminster Standards to the Christian Reader*. In: *The Subordinate Standards* (q.v.).
- Concord, Formula of*. 1580.
- Craig, S.G.: *Benjamin B. Warfield*. In B.B. Warfield *Biblical and Theological Studies* (q.v.).
- Cranmer, T. *On Baptism*. In his *Reform of the Laws*.
- Cyprian: *Epistles*. In ANF (q.v.).
- Dabney, R.L.: *Lectures on Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. Rep. 1976.
- De Groot, D.J.: *The Rebirth*. Kampen: Kok. 1952.
- De Groot, D.J.: *The Work of the Holy Spirit*. In eds. Berkouwer & Toornvliet *The Doctrine of the Church* (q.v.)
- Dorner, J.A.: *History of Protestant Theology*. E.T.
- Dorner, J.A.: *System of Christian Doctrine*. I-IV. E.T. Edinburgh,: Clark. 1882.

- Epiphanius: *Heresies*. In A. Migne: *Patrologia Graeca and Patrologia Latina*. Paris.
- Fairchild, A.G.: *Are Infants Elected? In The Great Supper*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publications. N.d.
- Flavel, J.: *Works*. London: Banner of Truth. Rep. 1968.
- Gale, J.: *Reflections on Mr. Wall's History of Infant Baptism* 1705f.
- Girardeau, J.L.: *Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism Compared as to Election, Reprobation, Justification and Related Doctrines*. Harrisonburg Va.: Sprinkle Pubs. Rep. 1984.
- Green, J.B.: *A Harmony of the Westminster Presbyterian Standards*. Collins World. 1971.
- Gregory Nazianzen: *Oration on Holy Baptism*. In *NPNF (q.v.)*.
- Gregory Nyssa: *On the Baptism of Christ*.
- Gregory Nyssa: *On the Untimely Death of Infants*.
- Harris, W.: *Grounds of Hope for the Salvation of All Dying in Infancy*. London: Clay. 1821.
- Henry, M.: *The Complete Works of the Rev. Matthew Henry*. Grand Rapids: Baker. 1978.
- Hodge, A.A.: *Evangelical Theology*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth. Rep. 1976.
- Hodge, A.A.: *The Confession of Faith*. London: Banner of Truth. Rep. 1958.
- Hodge, C.: *Systematic Theology*. I-III. London: Nelson. 1873.
- Honig, A.G.: *Reformed Dogmatics*. Kampen: Kok. 1938.
- Hooker, R.: *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. I-Vf. 1593f.
- Hooper, J.: *An Answer to My Lord Winchester's Book* (1547). Cambridge Parker Society.
- Hooper, J.: *Early Writings of Bishop Hooper*. Cambridge: Parker Society.
- Hunnius, A.: *Questions on Genesis Chapter Seven*.
- Hunnius, A.: *Saxon Visitation Articles* [Gnesio-Lutheran]. 1592.
- Inchley, J.: *All About Children*. London: Coverdale. 1976.
- Jeremias, J.: *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*. London: S.C.M. 1960.

Jerome: *Dialogue Against the Pelagians*.

Jerome: Epistles. In *ANF* (q.v.).

Junius, F.: *Theological Theses on Paidobaptism*. Ed. 1735.

Justin Martyr: *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*.

Justin Martyr: *First Apology to the Emperor Antoninus Pius*.

Kingdon, D.: *Children of Abraham*. Haywards Heath: Carey Pubs. 1975.

Koelman, J.: *The Heresy of the Labadists Thoroughly Uncovered and Refuted*.

König, A., Lederle, H.I., & Möller, F.P.: *Infant Baptism? The Arguments For and Against*.
Roodepoort, R.S.A.: C.U.M. Books. 1984.

Kramer, G.: *The Connection between Baptism and Regeneration*. Breukelen: De Vecht. 1897.

Krauth, C.P.: *Conservative Reformation*. Philadelphia: Lutheran Book Store.

Krauth, C.P.: *Infant Baptism and Infant Salvation*. Philadelphia: Lutheran Book Store. 1874.

Krauth, C.P.: *Infant Salvation in the Calvinistic System*. Philadelphia: Lutheran Book Store. 1874.

Kuyper Sr., A.: *A Myrtle Tree in the Place of a Thistle*.

Kuyper Sr., A.: *E Voto Dordraceno [In Agreement with Dordt]: Explanation of the Heidelberg Catechism* (1892). I-IV. Amsterdam: Wormser. 1894.

Kuyper Sr., A.: *From the Word*. I-VI. Amsterdam: Kruyt. 1875f.

Kuyper Sr., A.: *On the Sacraments*. In his *Dogmatic Dictations* IV. 2nd ed. Kampen: Kok. N.d.

Kuyper Sr., A.: *Regeneration and Conversion*. In his *From the Word* III.

Kuyper Sr., A.: *The Doctrine of the Covenants*. Kampen: Kok. 1909.

Kuyper Sr., A.: *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (1888). ET. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Ed. 1941.

Kuyper, H.H.: *Hamabdil: On the Holiness of the Covenant of Grace*. Amsterdam: Van Bottenburg. 1907.

Laurence, L.: *Bampton Lectures*. 1804.

Lee, F.N.: *Baptism Does Not Cleanse!* M.Div. dissertation. Florida: Whitefield Theological Seminary. 1990.

Lee, F.N.: *The Salvation of Early-Dying Infants of Unbelievers* In *Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa Theological Journal*. Stellenbosch. March 1971.

Lee, F.N.: *I Confess! Holy Scripture, the Westminster Confession, and the Declaratory Statement: Their Relationship to One Another in the Presbyterian Church of Australia*. Revised edition. Brisbane: Jesus Saves. 1991.

Link, L.: *Infant Salvation and Confessional Revision*. Richmond Va.: Onward Press. 1912.

Littooy, A.: *The Labour of Philip and the Covenant of Grace*. 1901.

Lumpkin, W.L.: *Baptist Confessions of Faith*. Philadelphia: Judson. 1959.

Luther, M.: *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520). In his *Works*.

Luther, M.: *The Fourteen [Patron Saints] of Consolation*. In *Works* (q.v.).

Luther, M.: *The Fourth Image*. In *The Fourteen [Patron Saints] of Consolation*. In Luther's *Works* (q.v.).

Luther, M.: *The Infernal Evil or the Evil Beneath Us*. In *The Fourteen [Patron Saints] of Consolation*, in Luther's *Works* (q.v.).

Luther, M.: *The Sacrament of Baptism*. In *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520). In his *Works* (q.v.).

Luther, M.: *To Two Clergymen About Rebaptism*. In his *Works*. Weimer ed.

McConoughy, D.: *Are Infants Saved?* Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publications. N.d.

Manton, T.: *Complete Works*. Worthington Pa.: Maranatha. Rep. ed. N.d.

Manton, T.: *Epistle to the Reader of the Westminster Standards*. In *The Subordinate Standards* (q.v.).

Marais, P.W.: *Infant Baptism and Sprinkling -- Yes or No?* Pretoria: W & M Publishers. 1974.

Marshall, S.: *A Sermon on the Baptizing of Infants*. London: Coates, Bowtell. 1644.

Marshall, S.: *Defence of Infant Baptism in Answer to Mr. Tombes*. 1648.

Miller, S.: *Infant Baptism*. Dallas: Presbyterian Heritage. 1984.

Mitchell, A.F., and Struthers, J.: *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*. Edmonton: Still Waters Revival Books. Rep. 1991.

Murphy, J.P.: *The Sacrament of Baptism*. London: Burns Oates & Washbourne. 1929.

Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (NPNF). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1971.

Nourse, W.L.: *Calvinism: and Calvinism and Infant Damnation*. In *The Presbyterian Quarterly*. Oct. 1891.

Oecolampadius, J.: *Answer to Balthazar Hubmaier's Little Book Against...Infant Baptism* 1527.

Owen, J.: *Works*. I-XVI. London: Banner of Truth. Rep. 1966.

Parkinson, G.G.: *Infant Baptism -- A Brief Study in Infant Salvation*. Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod.

Pieper, F.: *Christian Dogmatics*. I-IV. St. Louis: Concordia. 1953.

Potgieter, F.J.M.: *Redemption*. Bloemfontein: Sacum. 1953.

Pridmore, A.: *The New Testament Theology of Childhood*. Hobart: Buckland. 1977.

Presbyterian Board of Publications: *The Children of the Church and Sealing Ordinances*. Philadelphia. N.d.

Presbyterian Church in the USA: *The Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America - Part I: Book of Confessions*. Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly of the UPCUSA. 1967.

Presbyterian Church of Australia: *Declaratory Statement of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*. 1901.

Rentoul, J.L.: *Speech before the Presbytery of Melbourne*, Sept. 7th 1881. As reported in the *Argus*, Melbourne, Sept. 8th 1881.

Rice, N.L.: *Infant Damnation*. In *The Presbyterian Expositor*. June 15th 1858.

Ridderbos, H.N.: *The Covenant of Grace*. In Berkouwer & Toornvliet *op. cit.* (q.v.).

Ridderbos, H.N.: *The Means of Grace*. In eds. Berkouwer & Toornvliet *op. cit.* (q.v.).

Ridderus, F.: *Baptism and Salvation for the Children of Christians*.

Ridderus, F.: *Hist. Apol.*

Rivet(us), A.: *Annotations of Hugo Grotius...with Andrew Rivet's Animadversions* In his *Works*.

Rivet(us), A.: *Disputes*. In his *Works*.

Rivet(us), A.: *Theological Works*. Rotterdam. 1651-60.

Rivet(us) and Others: *Synopsis of Purer Theology*. 1581.

Roberts & Donaldson: *Ante-Nicene Fathers (I-X)*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1972.

Rockwell, E.F.: *The Early Conversion of Children*. In *Southern Presbyterian Review*. Apr. 1855.

Russell, D.: *Essay on the Salvation of All Dying in Infancy - including Hints on the Adamic and Christian Dispensations*. Glasgow: Waugh & Innes, Chalmers & Collins. 1823.

Russell, D.: *Infant Salvation or an Attempt to Prove that All who Die in Infancy are Saved*. Glasgow: Maclehose. 1844.

Schenck, L.B.: *The Presbyterian Doctrine of Children in the Covenant - An Historical Study of the Significance of Infant Baptism in the Presbyterian Church in America*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1940.

Schenck, W.E.: *Children in Heaven - or the Infant Dead Redeemed by the Blood of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Presb. Board of Pub. N.d.

Scott, T.: *The Articles of the Synod of Dordt*. Philadelphia. 1818.

Servetus, M.: *Against Infant Baptism*. In his *Restitution of Christianity*. 1553.

Servetus, M.: *Baptism at Thirty*. In his *Restitution of Christianity*. 1553.

Sfondrata, Cardinal: *Mode of Predestination*. Rome. 1696.

Sfondrata, Cardinal: *Two of the Most Erudite Dissertations Against Heretics on the Baptism of Infants* (posthumous).

Shaw, R.: *The Reformed Faith - An Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith*. Inverness: Christian Focus. Rep. 1973.

Shedd, W.G.T.: *Calvinism: Pure and Mixed - Two Conflicting Systems: A Defence of the Westminster Standards*. New York. 1893.

Shedd, W.G.T.: *Dogmatic Theology* (1894). I-III. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. Rep. ed. 1969.

Shields, C.W.: *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*. Oct. 1890.

Stagg, J.E.: *Calvin, Twisse and Edwards on Universal Salvation of Infants*. Richmond Va.: Presbyterian Committee on Publication. N.d.

Stander, H.F., & Louw, J.P.: *Baptism in the Early Church*. Garsfontein R.S.A.: Didaskalia Publishers. 1988.

Stevens, J.V.: *Elect Infants - or Infant Salvation in the Westminster Symbols*. Nashville. 1900.

Stokes, J.: *A Compassionate Plea for Infants*. Sussex. 1717.

Swanton, R.: *Our Heritage and Destiny*. Melbourne: Victorian Presbyterian Theological Hall. 1975.

Swanton, R.: *The Westminster Confession and the Declaratory Statement*. In *The Reformed Theological Review*. Jan.-Apr. 1985.

Tertullian: *On Baptism*.

Tertullian: *On the Soul*.

The Subordinate Standards of the Free Church of Scotland. Edinburgh: Free Church Offices. 1933.

Thomas, *The Gospel of*.

Toplady, A.H.: *Church of England Vindicated*. In his *Works* (q.v.).

Twisse, W.: *The Riches of God' s Love unto the Vessels of Mercy consistent with His Absolute Hatred or Reprobation of the Vessels of Wrath*. Oxford. 1653.

Ursinus, Z.: *Concerning the Baptism of Infants*. In his *Collected Works*.

Van Dyke Jr., H.: *God and Little Children. The Blessed State of All who Die in Childhood Proved and Taught as a Part of the Gospel of Christ*. New York. 1890.

Van Dyke, H.J.: *Christ and Little Children*.

Van Halsema, T.B.: *This Was John Calvin*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1959.

Van Lodensteyn, J.: *Views of Zion*. I-II.

Van Rensselaer, D.: *Endorsement of Eldridge' s "Relation of Baptized Children to the Church*. In *Home, School and Church*. 1852.

Van Rensselaer, C.: *The Revised Book of Discipline*. In *The Presbyterian Magazine*. March, 1859.

Van Toll, A.: *Treatise on Infant Baptism*.

Van Woerden, P.: *The Promises of the Gospel with a Few Meditations about Faith, Regeneration, Baptism, Profession and Assurance*. Dordrecht: Van den Tol. 1949.

Vaughan, R.: *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe, D.D.* London: Wycliffe Society. 1845.

Vedder, H.C.: *A Short History of the Baptists*. Philadelphia. 1907.

Vedder, H.C.: *Balthasar Huebmaier*. New York: Putnam. 1905.

Veenhof, C.: *In Order to Remain the Church*. Amsterdam: Buijten & Schipperheijn. 1966.

Veenhof, C., & Others. In: Dam, R.J., Holwerda, B., & Veenhof, C. *Around "1905" - A Historical Sketch*. Terneusen, Holland: D.H. Littooij Azn. 1946.

Venema, H.: *Sacred Dissertations*.

Verduin, L.: *The Reformers and their Stepchildren*. Exeter: Paternoster. 1964.

Vermigli, P.: *Common Places*.

Vision of Paul, The.

Walker, N.L.: *The Church Standing of Children*. Edinburgh: Clark. 1891.

Wall, W.: *A Defence of The History of Infant Baptism [Reply to Gale]*

Wall, W.: *History of Infant Baptism, I-II*. Oxford: University Press. 1862.

Wallace, R.S.: *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*. Tyler, Tx.: Geneva Divinity School Press. 1982.

Ward, R.S.: *The Westminster Confession for the Church Today*. Wantirna, Melbourne: 358 Mountain Highway. 1992.

Warfield, B.B.: *Are There Few That Be Saved?* In his *Bib. & Theol. Studies*.

Warfield, B.B.: *Children*. In his *Sel. Short. Writ. I (q.v.)*.

Warfield, B.B.: *Christian Baptism*. In his *Sel. Short. Writ. I (q.v.)*.

Warfield, B.B.: *Christ's "Little Ones."* In his *Sel. Short. Writ. I*.

Warfield, B.B.: *Infant Salvation*. In Warfield *Studies in Theology*.

Warfield, B.B.: *Review of N.L. Walker' s "The Church Standing of Children."* In *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*. 1892.

Warfield, B.B.: *Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield*. I-II. Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co. Ed. 1973.

Warfield, B.B.: *The Angels of Christ' s ' Little Ones.'*

Warfield, B.B.: *The Confession of Faith as Revised in 1903*.

Warfield, B.B.: *The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation*. New York: Christian Literature Co. 1891.

Warfield, B.B.: *Two Studies in the History of Doctrine*. New York: Christian Literature Co. 1897.

Webb, R.A.: *Calvin Memorial Addresses*.

Webb, R.A.: *The Theology of Infant Salvation*. Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publications. 1907.

Westminster Confession of Faith, The.

Whittsitt, W, and Warfield, B.B.: *Infant Baptism and Infant Salvation*.

Wigglesworth, M.: *The Day of Doom; or, a Poetical Description of the Great and Last Judgment; with other Poems [circa 1662]*. New York: American News Company. 1867.

Wilkinson, T.L.: *The Westminster Confession Now*. Mt. Albert, Victoria, Australia: 22 Serpentine St. 1992.

Witsius, H.: *Economy of the Covenants [alias On the Covenants]*. I-II London: Tegg. Ed. 1837.

Witsius, H.: *On the Efficacy and Utility of Baptism*. In his *Sacred Miscellanies*. I-II. 1686.

Zwingli, U.: *Balthazar' s ' Book on Baptism' Thoroughly Answered* 1527.

Zwingli, U.: *On Baptism, Rebaptism and Infant Baptism*. 1525.

Zwingli, U.: *Works*. Zurich. Eds. Schuler & Schulthess. 1830.

Zwingli, U.: *Polemic against the Catabaptistic Catastrophe*. 1527.

Zwingli, U.: *Sixty-seven Articles*. 1523.

Zwi Werblowsky, R.J.: *On the Baptismal Rite According to St. Hippolytus*. In Aland, K, & Cross, F.L.: *Patristic Studies* (II).

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF REV. PROFESSOR DR. FRANCIS NIGEL LEE

Dr. Francis Nigel Lee is the great-grandson of a fiery preacher whose family disintegrated when he backslid. Hence, he himself was born to an atheistic father and a Romish mother (in the Westmorland County of Cumbria in Great Britain). At the outbreak of the Second World War, his father was appointed by the Royal Navy as Chief Radar Officer (South Atlantic). Thus, the family moved to South Africa. There, Nigel became a Calvinist; had the great joy of leading both of his dear parents to Christ; and became a Minister of the Word and Sacraments in the Reformed Church of Natal.

Emigrating to the U.S.A., he attended the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America; transferred his ministerial credentials to that denomination, and pastored congregations in Mississippi and Florida. He was also: Professor of Philosophy at Shelton College in New Jersey; Research Scholar-in-Residence at the Christian Studies Center in Memphis; and Academic Dean of Graham Bible College in Tennessee. He was then the only person in the World serving on the Executives of both the British Lord's Day Alliance (headquartered in London) and the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States (headquartered in Atlanta).

Preacher, theologian, lawyer, educationist, historian, philosopher and author, Dr. Lee has produced more than 300 publications (including many books) -- and also a multitude of long unpublished manuscripts. In addition to an honorary LL.D., he has twenty earned degrees -- including nine earned doctorates* awarded for dissertations in law, literature, philosophy and theology. His latest major work is a dissertation of more than 3500 pages (and about a million words) on the roots of the Common Law.

Each morning Dr. Lee rises early; reads God's Word in eight languages; and then walks a couple of miles before breakfast. He has been round the world some six or seven times; has visited eighty-eight countries (some repeatedly); and has visited every Continent. He continues to be in demand as a promoter of doctoral students in Australia, Britain, Germany, South Africa and the United States.

A diehard predestinarian and unreconstructed Southerner, Dr. Lee is affectionately nicknamed "General Lee" by his closest friends. He is now sixty-seven years old. His elder daughter Johanna teaches German and Modern History in Parkridge High School, near Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

His younger daughter Anna was the Queensland Presbyterian Theological Seminary's Secretary/Librarian, and currently teaches at Nudgee Preparatory School, near Brisbane, Queensland.

Till his retirement at the end of 2000, Dr. Lee was the Professor of Systematic Theology and Caldwell-Morrow Lecturer in Church History at the Queensland Presbyterian Theological Hall in Brisbane. He is ably assisted by his wife Nellie (an unretired Homemaker still in that full-time Christian Service).

- * Th.D.: The Covenantal Sabbath
- Ph.D.: Communist Eschatology
- D.Min.: Daily Family Worship
- D.Ed.: Catechism Before Communion!
- S.T.D.: Rebaptism Impossible!
- D.R.E.: Baby Belief Before Baptism!
- D.Jur.: Women Ministers & Australian Litigation
- D.Litt.: Holinshed on the Ancient British Isles
- D.C.L.: The Roots and Fruits of the Common Law