

not well for us to consider, if, in denying to children the sign and seal of that covenant, we do not put a stumbling block in their way, and keep them back from the privileges which are at once their birthright and their blessing. The children of Jews were admitted to this covenant, and their Circumcision was a profitable service;* it sealed them as members of God's chosen family—it made them the inheritors of the promises made to Abraham—to Abraham and his seed forever.† And can it be that the Gospel, “*the ministration of glory*,” is so much less privileged than the Law, “*the ministration of condemnation*,” that the children of Christians—of Christians, the true and spiritual seed of Abraham,‡ are to derive no advantage from this gracious decree, and that thousands are to live and die without admission into the everlasting covenant? God forbid! “*Their angels do behold the face of their Father in heaven*,” and they cannot be excluded from the grace and favor of adoption upon earth.

It is possible that all of you have heard expressions of contempt on Infant Baptism—it is possible that some of you may have indulged in them; but, did our Lord sanction such expressions when He submitted to Infant Circumcision? and did He not most solemnly reprove them when He bade his disciples to “*suffer little children to come unto Him and forbid them not*”? § We learn from the history of the Circumcision, that infants might enter into covenant with God, and we see in the conduct of our kind Redeemer, that they might participate in spiritual mercies, for “*He laid his hands upon them and blessed them*.” It is a vain thing to argue that there is no express command to baptize infants; there needed none; the law of Circumcision was a sufficient rule, and in this law the time was distinctly prescribed; and it is the same covenant, only unveiled, made new and perfected with better hopes and better promises, of which Baptism is the sign and seal; and which was ordained by Christ when he charged his Apostles to “*disciple all nations*,”—there is no direction to *change* the time—there is no intimation that the time *was changed*, and in all the Scripture there is no word of prohibition upon the children of Christians. On the contrary, not only the Circumcision of the infant Jesus, but the word of his Apostles, the conduct of the first Christians, and the judgment of the whole Catholic Church, all combine to witness the truth which our reason approves and which our faith confirms, viz.

* Rom. iii. 1, 2.
§ Mark x. 14.

† Luke i. 55.

‡ Acts iii. 25. Gal. iii. 29.