

## **CH. 6: ANTIPAEDOCOMMUNIONISM OF THE POST-APOSTOLIC LORD'S SUPPER**

In this chapter we shall see there was no Paedocommunion among Judaists or Christians before 230 A.D. The Pre-Christian Paedocommunionism of the Eastern Pagan Nations was not primordial. Pagan Paedocommunionists, such as the Samaritans, were among those who attacked Pre-Christian Israel. Even among Post-Christian Judaists, there was no Paedocommunion till A.D. 230.

Judaism's Ancient Historian Josephus's description of the last Passover before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., supports this. In him, there is no sign women or children ate the Passover before A.D. 75 - nor, either, thereafter. (Josephus died just after 100 A.D.)

Israelitic women did not begin to eat the Passover before at least 180 A.D. To justify that Judaistic change from Old Testament practice at that time, later Judaists have rewritten history as regards manducating women at the Passover. Nor were any Jewish toddlers given the Passover before circa A.D. 220 - nor unweaned babies, even to this very day. Indeed, Karaite Jews and certain other Judaistic sects still give the Passover to their post-puberty males alone.

After tracing Judaism till A.D. 220, we shall then trace Pagan Paedocommunionism among the Pre-Christian Greeks - and, indeed, also in the first century A.D. We shall also see that Pagan Paedocommunionism did not even begin to pollute the Church - till A.D. 250f.

Next, we shall discuss Pre-Communion Catechism in the Bible. That shall be followed by an account of Pre-Communion Catechism among the Apostolic Fathers in general.

In particular, we shall then see that Paul's friend Clement of Rome implicitly opposed Paedocommunion as well as 'Weekly Communion.' We shall also note how the Didache covers the catechizing of covenant children as well as of adult converts - in 'Careful Communion.'

Ignatius of Antioch shall then be seen to insist on Confirmation Before Communion. We shall see Pliny says only non-adulterous adults were seen manducating at Communion Services. And we shall also note that even the Shepherd of Hermas affirms that only mature actions entitle Christians to receive the Supper.

Justin Martyr of Samaria required education before manducation at the Eucharist; and to him, Baptism and the Eucharist replaced Circumcision and the Passover. And to Theophilus and Athenagoras, the Eucharist involved no cannibalistic or pagan transubstantiation.

To Irenaeus of Lyons, there needed to be: Catechism during Christian childhood before Communion - and Catechism and Confirmation before admission to the Lord's Supper. For to him, there was a sweeping theological rationale for Mature Communion - but no *ex opere operato* (to which Paedocommunion tends).

The earliest extant Liturgy teaches even Catechumens did not manducate at the Eucharist. And Tertullian of Carthage believed: that only heretics give Communion to those merely

half-catechized; that there was to be no Communion without prior catechizing; that the Paedocommunionism of the antecatechetical and repaganized apostate Marcion was to be opposed; and that instead, a highly-catechetical Antipaedocommunionism was required by the Church Universal.

We shall then take a look at the catechetical practice of the Christian Church as reflected in Ancient Alexandria's famous 'Catechetical Schools.' In Clement of Alexandria, we shall find no Eucharistic Communion before sexual maturity - and find Eucharistic Communion only for those both weened and catechized. For Clement advocates catechizing covenant children ere their first eucharizing at their adolescence, and apparently only after three years of such catechizing.

Hippolytus of Portus (near Rome) sought to catechize only 'men and women' but not children for admission to Communion. And Origen of Caesarea taught that only the catechized are 'competent' to commune eucharistically. His *Against Celsus* is clearly antipaedocommunionistic, and so too are his *Homilies and Commentaries*.

Finally we shall see that Commodian of North Africa and the Syrian Didaskalia in the middle of the third century clearly required Catechism before Communion. Consequently, modern claims that Christian Paedocommunionism is Pre-Cyprianic - are false and hollow indeed.

#### 445. No Paedocommunion in Monotheism before 230 A.D.

By 'Monotheism' we here mean the claim to serve but the one and only Creator of all things. This claim was made first by the Patriarchs; next by the Old Testament Israelites; then by the Newer Testament's Christians; then by the Early Church; next by the Post-Christian Judaists; and thereafter by Post-Christian and Post-Judaistic Muslims.

Of these six groups, however, only the first four were rightly Trinitarian. For the fifth and sixth groups, Post-Christian Judaism and Post-Christian & Post-Judaistic Islam, represent novel unitarian reactions against the true religion and the true God of the Older and Newer Testaments.

In Older Testament times, it was as an adult (both before and after the fall) that Adam brought his gifts to God sacrificially. So too with Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses.

The latter enjoined that the sacrifice of the Passover be offered up and eaten only by catechized adults, to the exclusion of children (Exodus 12:3f,26f,37f). Solomon required catechizing before the beard started to grow. And Jesus, we read, was catechized when twelve (Luke 2:40-52).

In Newer Testament times, Jesus replace the Passover with His Supper, for mature and catechized adults (Luke 2:41-47 cf. 22:1-20). This, which Paul received from the Lord, is what he in turn delivered to the Church. First Corinthians 3:2; 5:7f;11:23-34; 13:11; 14:20 & 16:13).

Indeed, this is what is reflected also in the Epistle to the Hebrews (5:12 to 6:5f). And, implicitly, also in First John 2:12-14f - and in other Johannine and Petrine and the other writings of

the universal epistles in the Newer Testament.

Early Judaism, however, was a Post-Christian reaction not only against the Newer Testament and its interpretation of the Older Testament. It was a reaction also against the original and correct interpretation even of the Older Testament itself - of which only Early Christianity (also known as Proto-Protestantism), revived at the Protestant Reformation, is the correct post-incarnational interpretation and continuation.

Nay more. Modern Judaism is not merely a continuation of Anti-Christian and Post-Christian Early Judaism. Modern Judaism is a further radicalization of Post-Christian Ancient Judaism - also as regards its view of the Passover and of those who may or should manducate thereat.

By 'Proto-Protestantism' we mean Biblical Christianity. The true Older Testament Church was not merely monotheistic, but indeed also very consistently (though primitively) Trinitarian. Nay more. It was also Proto-Protestant - living by God's revealed truth, though surrounded by a seething sea of paedocommunionistic Paganism.

The true Newer Testament Church too was Proto-Protestant. For it was guided by the Holy Spirit - and thus preserved against all attacks also from the many mystery religions of Paganism, some of which were distinctly paedocommunionistic.

Also the true Post-Apostolic Early-Patristic Church upheld Proto-Protestantism. It was supported by the completed Bible - against all the corruptions of the heathen nations. However, false Post-Christian Judaism and (later) the degenerating Late-Patristic Church - both departed from the Bible. Each in its own way embraced pagan precepts such as Paedocommunionism.

Mercifully, a great cleansing of much of the Post-Patristic Church subsequently occurred. That took place especially at the Protestant Reformation. There, the Bible alone was once again upheld - and Paedocommunionism banished.

Quasi-Protestant Neo-Paedocommunionists have greatly erred. James Jordan misclaims: "Infants and small children participated in the Lord's Supper in the Western Church until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries."<sup>1238</sup> Ray Sutton adds "that Paedocommunion was practiced the first twelve centuries in the Western and Eastern churches."<sup>1239</sup>

Their Fellow-Paedocommunionist Chris Keidel, however, is rather more cautious. He states: "The first known witness is Cyprian in A.D. 231."<sup>1240</sup> Apart from the date (actually A.D. 251 instead of Keidel's 231), that is correct. Yet Cyprian did not witness in favour of that Paedocommunionism then incipiently just beginning - via Paganism - to infiltrate a segment of the Christian Church in Carthage. If anything, also Cyprian witnessed against it.

Keidel also adds "that the rationale usually given in the [Late Post-Nicene!] Early Church for infant inclusion in the Supper - was that eternal life was thereby secured on the basis of John 6:53." However, that text has nothing to do with the Eucharist - which had not even been instituted at the time to which that verse makes reference.

More erroneously, the Paedocommunionist Tommy Lee declares: "In Cyprian's time it is undeniably a matter of course for all of the Church, including the infants and young children, to participate in the Lord's Supper."<sup>1241</sup> Yet this assertion conveniently overlooks the fact that Cyprian himself was no advocate of Paedocommunion - but rather a chronicler of how that pagan practice was only then beginning to infiltrate a certain small segment of Christianity then characterized by those who had lapsed back toward Paganism/

In the following pages, we shall argue that none of the citations quoted (by Jordan & Sutton & Keidel & Tommy Lee) in the last four paragraphs above are true. We shall endeavour to show that Paedocommunionism is of pagan origin and was never approved by the Church until the fifth century A.D. (and, even then, wrongly so approved).

#### 446. Unprimordialness of Pre-Christian Paedocommunionism of Eastern Pagan Nations

According to the definitive work *The Religions of the World* by Rev. Professor Dr. G. van der Leeuw (as improved and expanded by Rev. Professor Dr. C.J. Bleeker) <sup>1242</sup> - like the primordial community of Adam and Eve and their minor children, also the later "primitive community is often represented in the religious rite by a single person.... The community which celebrate the rites, is limited....

"Very frequently, women are excluded from the rites - which, for example, we still find in the [Ancient Israelitic alias the] Jewish religion [Genesis 17 & Exodus 12]. As a rule, also the children are not admitted [Exodus 12:26-37] - and in general [the rite] is limited to those who have been initiated.... This development...can also end up differently, as we see in the Greek Mystery Religions" - which, though Pre-Christian, are hardly as old as that of Ancient Israel was.

Paganism greatly infected the Pre-Christian Greek mystery religions. Such certainly flourished - even in Corinth. And there, indeed - also during apostolic times. First Corinthians 10:7,19-21; 11:20-21; 12:1-3. Like the older pagan-oriental 'queen of heaven' religion (mentioned in Jeremiah 7:18), the Greek 'mysteries' too seem to have admitted even little children to their pagan feasts. So too, apparently, did the Hebrew-hating syncretistic Samaritans.<sup>1243</sup>

Perhaps via the worship of Baal and Astarte in the Near-Eastern Paganism of Jezebel from Sidon - these pagan and pernicious practices seem to have been spread by the sea-faring Phoenicians to Phrygia and Corinth and Carthage (alias 'New Phrygia') - in A-Phryg-ia (alias A-fric-a). From those places, they would first establish heresies like Montanism - and later plague and finally invade even the Mid-Patristic Christian Church.

Then, as the great Christian Catechist Cyril of Jerusalem pointed out (around A.D. 350), anent the notorious A.D. 160 cybelistic ex-pagan heretic Montanus:<sup>1244</sup> "he was a miserable man.... Having taken possession of Pepuza, a very small hamlet of Phrygia, he falsely named it 'Jerusalem' - and cut the throats of wretched little children and chopped them up into unholy food for the purpose of their so-called 'mysteries.'"

Pagan Paedocommunionism was prevalent outside of Israelitic circles during Older Testament times in the Near East and in India - and also in Ancient Greece, right down to Newer Testament times and beyond. Thus too Herodotus and Diogenes.<sup>1245</sup> Yet there is no accommodation whatsoever to pagan 'Child Communion' - in the divinely-inspired Holy Scriptures of both the Older and the Newer Testaments (before the closing of the Canon of Holy Scripture certainly no later than A.D. 97).

Nor was there any permitted practice of Paedocommunionism by the Older Testament's Israelites, or even by the Post-Christian Judaists mentioned in uninspired Jewish writings (before A.D. 230). Neither is there any trace whatsoever of any kind of 'Christian Paedocommunionism' (sic) in the Early-Patristic Church's uninspired though valuable documents authored by the earliest Church Fathers before A.D. 250 - and, indeed, little after that until around A.D. 350f.

To the contrary, quite the opposite. The infallible Holy Scriptures presupposes a mature-age use of the Sacrament of eating and drinking. Exodus 12:3-4,26,37; Deuteronomy 16:1-7,16f; Proverbs 22:6; Luke 2:41-47; First Corinthians 3:2f; 5:6f; 11:20-31; 13:11; 14:20; 16:13; and Hebrews 5:12 to 6:2.

So too, as shall be seen below, did the Apostolic Fathers and their successors. This they did - at least till the time of the A.D. 250 Cyprian of Carthage, if not also till even about a century thereafter.

#### 447. Pagan Paedocommunionism attacked Pre-Christian Israel

Reliable writings of Judaism<sup>1246</sup> show that not until about A.D. 230 did any uncatechized Judaistic children ever receive the Passover. It is true that even much earlier, while still in the wilderness around B.C. 1440-1400, God's ancient nation of Israel had temporarily become infected with Balaam's semi-paganism. But by and large, God had guided her through those infections, and enabled her to shake them off. Numbers 22:5f; 25:1f; 31:16; First Corinthians 10:3-8,11,14-21; Second Peter 2:10-15; Revelation 2:14.

Yet, especially after the death of Moses, pseudo-sacramentalistic heathen influences again - at least now and then - assailed God's people of the Older Covenant. Thus, even when the Older Testament's Israelites were dwelling in their own land, Jezebel's idolatry did infiltrate them during the ninth century B.C. Cf. First Kings 16:31f; 18:4,19 ; 21:25f; Revelation 2:20-23.

Some of the Israelites again became re-infected with pseudo-sacramentalistic pagan idolatry during, and after, the seventh century B.C. Speaking of certain paganizing Israelites, God said to His faithful prophet Jeremiah: "Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem?

"The children gather wood..., and the women knead their dough to make cakes to 'the queen of heaven' and to pour out drink-offerings to other gods!" Jeremiah 7:17f cf. 44:17f. Compare too: Ezekiel 8:6 to 9:6; 16:19-21,36; 20:24-32.

In this way, Gentile Paganism pseudo-sacramentally involved even little children in idolatrous food-and-drink offerings. *Pari passu*, it also polluted even some of the Israelites as God's Older Testament Covenant People - however temporarily.

This should have forewarned also God's Newer Testament Covenant People and their seed (the Christians), to beware of becoming polluted with pagan Paedocommunionism - as some of them sadly and increasingly did. That occurred, however, only from A.D. 250 to 400 onward. But it was later reversed during the blessed time of the Protestant Reformation.

It is possible that Pagan Paedocommunionism influenced even Judaism from about A.D. 230 onward. Indeed, it is certain such Pagan Paedocommunionism began to infiltrate even the Christian Church from A.D. 250 onward. But it was only after A.D. 400 that Paedocommunionism became the regular practice of the Deformed Mediaeval Church. And a millennium later, Ancient Antipaedocommunionism again became the sole practice of the Reformed Protestant Church.

448. No Paedocommunion among the Hebrews even from B.C. 170 till A.D. 230

Yet from the Anti-Hellenistic Maccabean period onward - B.C. circa 170f - the Older Testament covenant people were singularly free from infections caused by pagan practices such as Paedocommunion. This is seen from the writings of: the Dead Sea Scrolls; the Essenes; the Pharisees; the Newer Testament; the earlier portions of the Talmud - and Josephus.

Perhaps it was deforming and unitarianizing Judaism's very hatred of the Early-Christian Church which precipitated its immediate rejection of the Newer Testament. It also, slowly yet increasingly, caused Judaism to drift away even from the Older Testament (as it had sometimes done also before the incarnation of Jesus Christ).

Indeed, degenerating Post-Christian Judaism, in its increasing hatred of Trinitarian Biblical Christianity as the sole authentic continuation of man's true primordial religion, now sometimes allied itself more and more (as its purer Israelitic predecessor had occasionally done at times also before Malachi) - even with Paganism. See: Luke 23:6-12; Matthew 28:11f; Acts 4:25f; 13:50f; 14:5; 17:5-8; 18:5-17; 19:8f; First Thessalonians 2:14-16.

Such Post-Christian Judaism did indeed preserve some elements of the Older Testament's truth. But it also became more and more corrupted - by ultimately absorbing even pagan elements too. Fully to understand this, we must survey the sacramental history of degenerating Judaism especially from 70 A.D. to 230f A.D.

449. The A.D. 75 Josephus on the last Passover before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D.

Around 75 A.D., the famous Palestinian Judaistic Historian Josephus gave an important eye-witness description of the last Passover Feasts in the temple precincts. Such occurred shortly before the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem - at "the Feast of Unleavened Bread."1247

Writes Josephus: "The number of those that perished in the whole siege, [was] eleven hundred thousand.... They were come up from all the country, to the Feast of Unleavened Bread; and were all of a sudden shut up by an army."

Now, then, explained Josephus, "a 'Company' no less than ten belongs to every sacrifice." This was the Minyan of ten adult males that manducated of the passover lamb.

Then, continued that contemporary, the "high priests, upon the coming of the Feast which is called the Passover..., found the number of sacrifices was two hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred. This - upon the allowance of no more than ten that feast together - amounts to two millions seven hundred thousand and two hundred persons that were pure and holy."

That excludes those Israelites such as toddlers and infants and women - who were not pure and holy enough to manducate at the Passover. Cf. Exodus 12:3-4 & 12:26 & 12:37 & 12:43-49 & 23:14-17 & 34:22f; Leviticus 15:2-33; Deuteronomy 16:16f. This number of 2 700 200 seems right, for we know some seven million Jews then lived throughout the Roman Empire.

Josephus rightly added that "as to those that have the leprosy, or the gonorrhoea [alias seminal emissions]; or women, that have their monthly courses [alias menstruations]; or such as are otherwise polluted - it is not lawful for them to be partakers of this [Passover] Sacrifice. Nor indeed for any foreigners neither, who come hither to worship."1248

#### 450. Conclusions to be drawn from Josephus's above-mentioned description

To the A.D. 75 Judaistic Historian Josephus, a 'Company' consisted of a Minyan or 'Number' of ten mature males. Compare: Genesis 14:14-24; 17:25-27; 18:1-33; Exodus 12:3-4,21,26-28,37 & 18:12-25 & 24:1-14; Deuteronomy 1:13-15 & 23:1-3; Joshua 22:14; Judges 6:25-27 & 20:10; Ruth 4:1-5; Luke 2:41-44 & 22:1-15. In this regard, the following is apparent - in connection with Josephus's description of the last Passover Feasts in Jerusalem just right before 70 A.D.

First. The high priests themselves counted that more than 256 000 'passover lambs' were then slain. That implies at least 2 560 000 mature males that ate thereof (at least ten per Minyan) - at a time when it is known that in the Roman Empire alone at least seven million Jews then resided, many of whom attended the High Feasts in Jerusalem. Cf. Matthew 14:14-21; 26:5; Luke 2:41f & 22:1f; John 2:13-23 & 6:4-10 & 7:2-37 & 12:12-20; and Acts chapter 2.

Second. Josephus thus computes there were then not less than ten qualified eaters for every 'passover lamb.' That reinforces the Older Testament's concept of ten adult males being needed to constitute a viable Congregation of the people of God (as shown two paragraphs earlier).

Third. This yields (says Josephus) "2 700 200 persons" that "were pure and holy." They and they alone were there and then qualified to eat of the Passover Sacrament.

Fourth. This 2.7+ million, excluded from actually eating of the Passover: (a) all men with leprosy and 'gonorrhoea' alias all kinds of male 'issues' including seminal emissions; (b) all

women, who had monthly courses or menstruations; (c) all such as are otherwise polluted, including all of the never-cleansed Jewish children; and (d) also all unproselytized and therefore uncatechized adult male foreigners. Exodus 12:3-48; Leviticus 12:2 to 15:33; Numbers 9:10-14.

Fifth. All uncircumcisable Jewesses who had reached the age of menstruation - were ipso facto excluded from eating at that Passover (and, if then menstruating, from even attending it). So too the uncircumcisable women past that age. Jewish girls who had not yet reached the age of menstruation - just like circumcised male Jews who had not yet reached the age of twelve (and begun their seminal emissions only when their beard began to grow) - would, of course, not even attend the Jerusalem Passover Feast. Cf. Luke 2:40f.

Sixth. The 2.7 million Passover manducators mentioned by Josephus, were all mature and cleansed males. Such persons, Josephus implies, excluded the non-menstruating women - and the twelve-year-old boys who also attended the Feast without there eating of its sacramental lamb. Cf. Luke 2:40-43 & John 6:4f with Matthew 14:21.

Seventh, "as to those [mature males] that have the leprosy; or the 'gonorrhoea'; or women, that have their monthly courses; or such as are otherwise polluted - it is not lawful for them to be partakers of this sacrifice; nor indeed for any foreigners neither, who come hither to worship." Indeed, it was not lawful for any such to attend at the Feast even if that were to have been intended only in a non-manducatory capacity.

451. The A.D. 75 Josephus says no women or children ate the Passover before 75 A.D.

Now Josephus does imply<sup>1249</sup> that, at Jerusalem's last Passover Feasts, (perhaps) twelve-year old Hebrew sons and (certainly) non-menstruous Hebrew wives were then together with their own Hebrew husbands and/or other catechized and (re)-purified adult menfolk. Cf. Numbers 9:5-14. The latter ('tribe by tribe')<sup>1250</sup> were, before its destruction around 70 A.D., still making the journey to Jerusalem - to offer the Passover sacrifice. Luke 2:40-52.

However, such women and twelve-year-old boys who were then together with their catechized and communing menfolk (thirteen years old and above), are not themselves said to have eaten at that sacrifice. "Nor indeed," added Josephus,<sup>1251</sup> did "any foreigners who came to worship here" in Jerusalem.

Josephus also remarks<sup>1252</sup> that it is was only when he himself was "about fourteen years of age" - and thus after his Bar Mitzvaah Confirmation as a Communicant 'Son of the Law' unto admission to Passover manducation not before attaining thirteen years and a day of age - that he himself had "frequently" been consulted "about the accurate understanding of points of the Law." Indeed, it was only thereafter that he was thus consulted by his peers - namely, by "the high priests and principal men [or similarly-confirmed adult males] of the city." Cf. Luke 2:41-52.

So, even at late as 75 A.D., it was still the case that only adult males constituted the discerning "company" of at least ten within the "Congregation" of the Israelites that ever ate the passover lamb. If, as we think, the canon had closed by A.D. 70 - Paedocommunion then stands irrebuttably



disproved!

452. No Israelitic women ate the Passover before at least 180 A.D.

As Beckwith<sup>1253</sup> rightly points out, all Pharisees before A.D. 180 forbade the eating of the Passover by women and by all boys below thirteen years of age. The very rivalry between the Pharisees and Sadducees who then squabbled with one another on other points, tended to unite them on this particular matter which till then had never even been disputed within Judaism.

Beckwith further concludes that the great Jewish scholar (J.B.) "Segal is...probably right, in holding that the participation of women and children in the Passover meal" was still excluded for at least a century after Titus destroyed the temple. See Segal's definitive book *The Hebrew Passover from the Earliest Times to A.D. 70* - on this very point.<sup>1254</sup> Interestingly, J.B. Segal does not hesitate "in claiming that minors were not admitted to the Passover until after A.D. 70" - thus Beckwith.

We ourselves would add that this did not take place until about "at least a century" after the canon-closing completion of the inscripturation of Holy Writ (whether that occurred by A.D. 70 or by 95). Judaism did not admit minors to her Passovers until at least 230 A.D.

For first, there would need to be the necessary change from celebrating the Jews' annual Passover in the Jerusalem temple (as before its 70 A.D. destruction), to thereafter celebrating it in their own homes elsewhere instead. Only after that could and did deforming Non-Christian and increasingly Anti-Christian Judaists wrongly begin to admit first their womenfolk and then later even their own minor children, in their homes, to their domesticated annual Passover celebrations.

Josephus, adds Beckwith, was - of course - not a Pharisee. He himself was of priestly descent. Yet also the first century A.D.'s Josephus<sup>1255</sup> rightly says that, though the priestly and liberal Sadducees had possession of the High Priest's Office - the power of the conservative Pharisees with the people was such that the Sadducees then still had to give way to the Pharisees.

At the outset of his autobiography *Life*, Josephus says he was conversant with the Law by age fourteen, and from age sixteen studied not only with the Pharisees and the Sadducees but also with Essene-like Banus for three years - even though "all worship and sacrifice was carried out in accordance with Pharisaic views." This, at least fundamentally if not always in practice, was then still based on the Law of God in the Older Testament.

This was especially so after the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70. After that event, the importance of the priestly Sadducees drastically declined vis-a-vis the tradition-maintaining Pharisees.

Indeed, the Pharisees - it must be remembered - then held the line at thirteen years and a day as the minimum age at which a male Israelite would be accorded minyan majority status within the Congregation of Israel. Exodus 12:1-4,26,37 compare Aboth 5:21.

Says Josephus:1156 "'Companies' (or Phatriai) are...much in evidence at the Passover." Those very 'Companies' or Phatriai were Chebrooth (or Chabuwrooth) of all-male, mature and cleansed participants.

Those Passover-eaters were in 'Companies' like the one which accompanied Joseph to Jerusalem (in Luke 2:41-44) - or just like the 'Company' of the approximately ten adult male Chabeeriyim or 'Friends' who with Jesus shared in His last Passover - at the very time when He Himself inaugurated the very first Lord's Supper. Compare: Matthew 14:21 & 20:24; Mark 6:39f & 10:41; Luke 9:14 & 22:11-14; John 6:4-10 & 11:55 & 13:1-10 & 15:13-15 and 20:24 - with Genesis 14:14-24; 17:25-27; 18:1-33; Exodus 12:3-4,21,26-28,37 & 18:12-25 & 24:1-14; Deuteronomy 1:13-15 & 23:1-3; Joshua 22:14; Judges 6:25-27 & 20:10; and Ruth 4:1-5.

453. Judaism increasingly gave the Passover to Jewesses only after 180 A.D.

Yet a dramatic change in the Passover practices of many Judaists now took place. Indeed, this big change seems to have occurred during the century after the 70 A.D. destruction of the Jerusalem temple. It had certainly occurred by 180 A.D.

Before A.D. 70, during the Passover, only those males twelve years old and above ever ate at the temple precincts - though, if married, they often went there together with their non-manducating wives. Before A.D. 70, only those catechized and purified males who were at least thirteen years old - ever actually ate of the Passover.

But now, after the A.D. 70 destruction of the Jerusalem temple, the celebration of the Passover reverted to private homes - as, at the first, in Egypt (Exodus 12:3f). Yet unlike the ancient practice in Egypt and thereafter, the Passovers of more and more Jews - once again in private dwellings - a century after A.D. 70 and for the first time ever slowly but surely began to admit also mature Jewesses as fellow manducators.

Thus these Judaists - departing from the by-then-completed standard of Scripture - now began, unbiblically, admitting first their women and then later even their post-infant children (but not their babies) to the Passover Table. Ultimately, they did so even without any prior catechizing.

Remarks Beckwith:1258 "The first step taken, was to [insist and hence to] get women and children to come to the meal, without requiring that they drink the Passover wine.... The second step [was] to insist that they do this [viz. actually drink the Passover wine] as well.

"The first step was taken in the first century [but only after 70 A.D.].... The custom of women and children participating [and finally also manducating thereof], grew from then onward...

"The second step was still a matter of controversy in the time of Rabbi Judah, about 180 A.D..... It was probably not taken before...[almost the end of] the second century A.D. By that date [180 A.D.]: the temple had been destroyed [in 70 A.D.]; the [Passover] meal was in the home"; and it was no longer in the temple, which had by then ceased to exist more than a century earlier. "Women and children were [now] attending it [the Passover] as a matter of course. And the time was ripe to incorporate them fully [viz. as manducators at the Passover] into the established ritual"

of post-200-A.D. apostate Judaism. Thus Beckwith.

454. Some later Judaists (like Maimonides) rewrote history regarding women at the Passover

Now before then, also the definitive tradition in the Babylonian Talmud regarding the Numbers 9:13 Passover drew a distinction between a minor on the one hand - and (on the other hand) a "man" who alone could celebrate it.<sup>1259</sup> Indeed, even the Paedocommunionist Keidel himself admits<sup>1260</sup> that where the Talmudic tract Pesachim (88a) mentions 'minors' precisely as regards the Passover - this means "probably anyone under thirteen, [as] the age at which a child becomes subject to the Commandments (Aboth 5:21)."

The Post-Christian Judaistic Mishnah clearly distinguishes between the (pre-70 A.D.) 'Temple Passover' - and the subsequent 'Domestic Passover.' The former was for adult males only; but the latter was gradually extended first to women and then to small children (though never to unweaned infants). Pesachim 5:1 to 9:11 & 10:3 & 7:1, compare Yom Tob 2:7.

Thriving Christianity had rightly replaced Circumcision with Baptism and the Passover with the Holy Communion - and had given the latter to qualified mature women ever since Calvary. Cf. Acts 8:12 and First Corinthians 11:3-33 and Galatians 3:27-29 and First Peter 3:7.

So, ailing Judaism - no doubt in a desperate attempt to recoup its losses to Christianity, and trying to win back Hebrew Christians in general (and especially the many Christian Hebrewesses alias Hebrew-Christian women) for Judaism once more - later began to follow suit, by now extending manducation at its Passovers during the second century A.D. also to its womenfolk. Cf. Luke 23:55f & Mark 16:1f & Acts 6:1-7 cf. also the 75 A.D. Judaist Josephus's Wars of the Jews 6:9:3.

Accordingly, the (less definitive) Jerusalem Talmud<sup>1261</sup> later began to claim that "the Passover of women is a discretionary thing." Subsequently, the Late-Mediaeval Judaist Moses Maimonides (A.D. 1135-1204) roundly stated<sup>1162</sup> that women were admitted to the Paschal Feasts. Indeed, he even stated that at times - there was a 'Company' which consisted only of women.

There is, however, no evidence of this at all before Calvary - nor indeed even before A.D. 180. Cf.: the Older Testament; Jubilees 49; Aboth 5; the Qumran Manual; the Newer Testament; Josephus; and the definitive Babylonian Talmud.

Yet not long after the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, Judaism changed its ancient Passover practices. Perhaps it felt constrained to follow the Early Christian practice of admitting even catechized women to the Lord's Table from their puberty onward. First Corinthians 11:11-20f cf. Acts 8:12.

At any rate, deteriorating Talmudic Judaism not only then replaced the 'Temple Passover' with the 'Domestic Passover.' It also had to make yet other concessions.

Post-Christian Judaism was now: struggling for survival; desperate for renewal; fearful of

losing more Jewesses to Christianity; and doubtless also desirous of re-judaizing all Hebrew females it had lost to the Church. Accordingly - Post-Christian Judaism started to permit even pubescent girls to become 'Daughters of the Law' and Communicants at the Passover. This was now effected, by the new institution of 'Confirmation' for Judaistic females -- namely at a Bath Mitzvaah ceremony, on their attainment of adolescence.

455. No Jewish toddlers were given the Passover before circa 220 A.D.

Jewish sucklings, to this very day, have never been admitted to the Passover. Indeed, even the admission of Judaism's weaned children to manducation at the Passover, is of even later origin than its admission of women.

The A.D. 135 to 220 conservative Rabbi Judah never complained about the time-honoured practice of using alcoholic wine at Passover. Yet he did complain about the approximately A.D. 220 and pre-230 A.D. innovation of some Judaists at the Passover Feast. We mean their innovation of then starting to give time-honoured alcoholic Passover wine even to post-infant minor children (not yet thirteen).

Precisely in relation to this new practice at the Passover, this conservative Rabbi Judah complained (around 220 A.D.): "Of what benefit then is wine to children?"<sup>1263</sup> Indeed, even the approximately 230f A.D. Judaistic Mishnaah - while (wrongly) now permitting post-infantile 'Child Communion' at the Passover - still (rightly) prohibited infants from eating it.<sup>1264</sup>

Even the third-century-A.D. Halakic Midrash on Exodus - Mekilta - rightly understood the phrase 'according to the number of souls' in Exodus 12:4a. There, the Mekilta states that the "phrase 'every man according to his eating' - "eliminates" also "the little one" alias the child. For 'every man' alias every mature male clearly excludes all children. Indeed, because "they cannot consume of it as much as an olive's bulk - the Passover lamb may not be slaughtered for them."<sup>1265</sup>

Sadly, however, the 230f A.D. Mishnaah - which itself went through a process of devolutionary development - finally adopted the innovation of allowing even small Jewish children (but not infants) to manducate at the Passover.<sup>1266</sup> Yet even after that - no one was to be admitted to the Passover who could not eat an olive's bulk of the meat of the Passover lamb.<sup>1267</sup>

Yet even the rather later (250 - 350 A.D.) Judaistic Gemara still rejected Passover Communion for infants, and also for very small children. It stated:<sup>1268</sup> "If a child can eat an 'olive size' of roast meat, the Paschal lamb may be slaughtered on his behalf - as it is said, 'according to the eating of every man' [Exodus 12:4b]."

Otherwise, clearly not! So, then, even at the very end of the Talmudic era - infant intinction had always been unknown to Judaists at their Passover. That is still the case, even today. And this fact alone helps expose the monstrous Neo-Paganism and Ultra-Sacramentarianism of the wayward Eastern-'Orthodox' and Semi-Pelagian ecclesiastical denominations.

456. The Karaite Jews still give their Passovers only to their post-puberty males

By our own twentieth century, much of Post-Christian Judaism had long ago capitulated to the Christian influence of 'Communion for Women' - and also, though only thereafter, to the pagan influence of 'Communion for Children.' Yet the Karaites and certain other very conservative Jews to this very day - still restrict the Passover to their mature males alone.

In his seminal volumes *The Religions of the World*, G.T. Bettany writes<sup>1269</sup> about this "ancient sect...of the Karaites." He says: "They rejected all traditions in order to keep to the Holy Scripture [viz. the Old Testament]. Thence they derived their name 'men of the Scripture'...against the authority of the Talmud.... The sect increased till the fourteenth century [A.D].... The Karaite literature was expanded and...at present many Karaites are to be found in the Crimea and in some areas of Asia."

The well-respected Christian commentator Rev. F.C. Cook has drawn attention to a very important fact in his *Commentary on Exodus*. Very significantly and appropriately at Exodus 12:4 precisely as regards the words 'every man according to his eating' (alias 'each adult male accustomed so to eat'), Cook has accurately stated that "the Karaites permit...none but adult males to be partakers" who may manducate at their Passovers.<sup>1270</sup>

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in its article *Qaraites*, points out<sup>1271</sup> that these "Karaites" or 'Sons of the Scripture' were a "Jewish sect claiming to return to Primitive Judaism by restoring the Scriptures to their rightful place now usurped by [rabbinical] tradition.... The Karaites have always endeavoured to prove their antiquity and to trace their origin to former sects that had existed and decayed before 'Karaism' arose."

According to the prestigious Shapiro-Vallentine's well-known twentieth-century (rabbinical!) *Jewish Encyclopaedia*,<sup>1272</sup> these 'Karaites' are a famous "sect within Judaism which rejects talmudic authority and bases itself on individual interpretation of the Bible.... Large numbers of Babylonian Jews had shown rebelliousness against the burdens imposed by rabbinic law.... Adherents were advised to spurn [rabbinical] tradition, but to search for truth in the Bible.... They became known as *Bene Mikrah* or *Karaim* -- 'Readers of the Scriptures'.... The adherents of tradition [on the other hand] came to be known as 'Rabbanites' - adherents of the rabbis.

"The largest and most productive group of Karaites in more recent years, was in [the Ukraine in] southern Russia.... In the last five centuries, relations [with the preponderant 'Rabbanites'] were practically broken.

"Under Russia, the Karaites broke away from the [modern rabbinical] Jews.... There are now circa twelve thousand Karaites, most of them in the Crimea."

From a Dutch Reformed Christian perspective, also the Rev. Professor Dr. G. van der Leeuw has acknowledged<sup>1273</sup> that "the Karaites - from *Mikra* (the Holy Scripture) - wished to free themselves from the Talmud not because of [their] libertinism or love of ease but because of [their] conservatism. The Law of Moses was fully accepted by them. But they feared the additions of the Scribes who, instead of giving exposition and application, also overrode that which was ancient and

[who had also] unrecognizably altered it. This is reminiscent of the word of Jesus against the traditions of the Scribes [alias the ancestors of the Rabbanites in Matthew 15:1-9]....

"The motives of...the Karaites were totally different" to that of the Scribes and their rabbinical descendants. For the Karaites 'Proto-Protestantly' wished to cling only to the Older Testament Bible. They therefore rejected also the traditions of both the Post-Malachic Scribes and also of Post-Christian Rabbinical Judaism (such as the latter's advocacy of and incorporation therein of the Post-Biblical and rabbinized Paedocommunionism derived perhaps even from Ancient Paganism).

Indeed, also the modern rabbinical and therefore Anti-Karaite Encyclopaedia Judaica concedes that the Karaites were very ancient. It even admits they were possibly influenced by the Pre-Christian 'Dead Sea Sect.' 1274

Rejecting the Paedocommunionism of modern Rabbinism, these 'fundamentalistic' Karaites claim linear descent from the Bible-believing Israelites of Pre-Christian days. Indeed, that is why they based their Passover practice - for mature males alone - only on the teachings of the Older Testament.

#### 457. Pagan Paedocommunionism among the Pre-Christian Greeks

The 'Father of Ancient History' - the famous B.C. 484f Pagan Greek Historian Herodotus - states that among the paedocommunionistic Pagans in India, even parents were eaten sacrificially by their own children. Indeed, also the B.C. 412f Pagan Philosopher Diogenes taught children to offer up even their own parents in paedocommunionistic sacrifice - and moreover also to devour them. 1275

Paedocommunionism, with its absence of pre-manducatory catechization, had long held sway in many of the 'magical' and pagan Pre-Christian Mystery Religions - whether those of Ancient Greece, or those of the Ancient Orient. Cf. Jeremiah 7:16-19 & 44:15-19. Around 230 A.D., it finally invaded most brands also of Judaism.

Then, beginning from about A.D. 250 onward, and more especially from A.D. 400 onward, it overwhelmed much of the Christian Church - especially in the East. Hence the latter's new names - Greek-'Orthodox' and Eastern-'Orthodox.'

These Ancient-Greek and Ancient-Oriental Mystery Religions certainly flourished also during the first century A.D., even in Corinth. First Corinthians 10:7,19-21; 11:20-21,28-32; 12:1-3. Indeed, like the older Near-Eastern 'Queen of Heaven' (and Cybele?) religions of the sex-goddess Astarte and the sex-god Baal to which they seem to have been related and from which at least in part they seem to have been derived - these Greek 'Mystery Religions' too seem to have admitted even certain little children to their pagan feasts.

On all this, see inter alia also my book Pentecostalism: New Outpouring or Ancient Heresy? It is sub-titled From Baal-Worship to Pentecostalism. 1276

We have already seen above that some brands of ancient Pagan Paedocommunionism involved children eating their own parents. See five paragraphs earlier above.

Other brands of ancient Pagan Paedocommunion at least sometimes seem to have been accompanied also with the slaughter of children as human sacrifices. Thus Dr. Sir James George Frazer - F.R.S., F.B.A., D.C.L., Litt.D., LL.D., D.Phil. (honoris causa).

Sir James G. Frazer is the renowned writer of the monumental book on Comparative Religion, *The Golden Bough*. There, he states:<sup>1277</sup> "Among the Semites of Western Asia, the king...sometimes gave his own son...as a sacrifice...."

"Philo of Byblus...says: 'It was an ancient custom in a crisis of great danger, that the ruler of a city or nation should give his beloved son to die for the whole people, as a ransom offered to the avenging demons - and the children thus offered, were slain with mystic rites. So Cronus..., having an only-begotten son called Jeoud (for in the Phoenician tongue Jeoud signifies "only-begotten"), dressed him in royal robes and sacrificed him upon an altar in a time of war, when the country was in great danger from the enemy.'

"When the King of Moab was besieged by the Israelites and hard beset, he took his eldest son, who would have reigned in his stead. And he offered him, for a burnt offering, on the wall."

Interestingly, similarly stories are found also among the pagan Ancient Greeks - and sometimes even attributed to their pagan gods. Thus, in "the 'Mysteries'" - explained the learned Christian Apologist Clement of Alexandria around 190 A.D.<sup>1278</sup> - "the bacchanals hold their orgies in honour of the frenzied Dionysius, celebrating their sacred frenzy by the eating of raw flesh, and go through the distribution of the parts of butchered victims...."

"Then there are the 'Mysteries' of Demeter.... She is called...'the entreaties of Zeus' and 'the drink of gall' - 'the plucking out of the hearts of sacrifices'...."

"Such rites the Phrygians perform in honour of Attis and Cybele." Indeed - of the latter mother-goddess, the later false-prophet Montanus<sup>1279</sup> had been a priest before his Baptism and ere he launched the (paedocommunionistic?) heresy of Montanism from A.D. 150f onward..

"The 'Mysteries' of Dionysius," continues Clement, "are wholly inhuman. For while still a child...the Titans...tore him limb from limb.... Zeus...perceived the savour of the pieces of flesh being cooked...."

"Jupiter himself...partook of a human table" and "satiated himself with human flesh.... For the god did not know that...Lycaon the Arcadian his entertainer had slain his son...and served him up cooked before Zeus."

No wonder, then, that the Christian Apologist Clement of Alexandria enjoined the practitioners of those Grecian 'Mysteries':<sup>1280</sup> "Do you not see Moses, the hierophant of the truth, enjoining that no eunuch or emasculated man [such as a pre-adolescent boy] or son of a harlot

should enter the Congregation?" Deuteronomy 23:1. "An innate original communion between [adult] men and Heaven [was] obscured through [later] ignorance...[and] leapt forth instantaneously from the darkness....

"Abandon your delusion, and speed your flight back to Heaven! 'For we too were once children of wrath, just like others.

"'But God, being rich in mercy - for the great love with which He loved us when we were then dead in trespasses - quickened us together with Christ.'" Ephesians 2:3-5.

The famous Scholar of Antiquities Rev. Professor Dr. G. van der Leeuw remarks<sup>1281</sup> that "in the Pre-Christian Eleusinian mysteries of Ancient Greece, since the second half of the fifth century B.C....even women and slaves were admitted.... In Eleusis, to serve the goddesses was indeed a rite of the entire community."

Later, it "developed into a 'Mystery Religion'.... In that way, a supranational religious bond was in principle laid down. It was a miniature of what would soon be consummated, on a larger scale, in Christianity [sic]" - at least from the middle of the fourth century A.D. onward until the Protestant Reformation would reverse all of this!

For the Eleusinian devotee "had salvation imparted to him, by participating in the holy 'Mysteries'. In the same way, believers would [later] participate in the Mass" of the deformed mediaeval Church. Thus Rev. Professor Dr. van der Leeuw.

Rose and Farnell add in the Encyclopaedia Britannica that in these Eleusinian mysteries, "the Ephebi marched out to Eleusis.... The legally qualified were all Hellenes...above a certain very youthful limit of age."<sup>1282</sup> Thus, post-infantile child communion.

Indeed, Dr. Rose - a noted authority on Classic-Pagan 'Mystery Religions' - declares that an "old and popular rite...had the carrying of...a kind of small maypole - consisting of a branch of olive or laurel hung with fruit, bread, cakes, and little bottles of...wine and oil. The bearers of it were children.... The Athenian children sang: 'Eiresione brings figs and fat loaves, honey in a jar, and oil to scrape her off - and a cup of strong wine to drink herself to sleep on!'"<sup>1283</sup>

#### 458. Pagan Paedocommunionism in the first century A.D.

In the Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion & Ethics,<sup>1284</sup> Rev. Dr. J.H. Srawley (in his article on the Eucharist) makes some interesting comments about the rise of that Christian Sacrament amid a sea of surrounding Paganism. He targets his concerns especially as regards Corinth.

In First Corinthians 10:16f, explains Srawley, "Paul dwells upon the inconsistency of Christians taking part in idolatrous feasts.... His language is suggested by the associations of the sacrificial feast - an institution which finds a place not only in Semitic life but also in Greek religion as well as in early tribal religions....



"Much is made of the parallel which St. Paul draws in First Corinthians ten between heathen sacrificial feasts on the one hand and the Christian Eucharist on the other, where the 'Table of the Lord' is contrasted with 'the table of devils.'" In Corinth's Church, at least till Paul's corrective in First Corinthians 11:20-34, 'the table of devils' seems to have infected the 'Table of the Lord' - certainly as regards disorderliness and perhaps also as regards who manducated there.

Srawley continues: "A parallel is sought for St. Paul's implied reference to the Christian Sacrament (First Corinthians 10:3f) as 'spiritual food' and 'spiritual drink' - in the Eleusinian 'Mysteries' where the initiated became 'etheoi' by means of a meal in which they partook in some way of the body of Dionysus.... The existence of sacrificial feasts in the Pagan World was plainly known to St. Paul, as the passage in First Corinthians ten shows....

"But St. Paul in the same chapter appeals also to similar feasts among the Jews (First Corinthians 10:18 [cf. too v. 3f; and the Passover in 5:6f]).... At the same time, it is possible to admit that at Corinth such an influence of pagan customs may have been at work in the case of St. Paul's converts." First Corinthians 10:7-22; 11:20,21,28-32 cf. 12:1-3.

Of course, 'Mainstream Christianity' during the Apostolic Age did not in any way absorb such perverse Paganism. Instead, it roundly opposed it.

Rev. Professor Dr. H.A.A. Kennedy rightly assesses this, in his own<sup>1285</sup> article in the Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. Writes he, on these heathen 'Mysteries': "It is highly probable that [pagan!] 'baptismal' rites and 'sacramental' meals...were conceived in Hellenistic religion as working *ex opere operato*. No such idea is discernable in the utterances of St. Paul."

Nevertheless, as Rev. Dr. P. Gardner states<sup>1286</sup> in his own Hastings' Encyclopaedia article on these Mysteries: "The question how far Early [Post-Apostolic] Christianity was affected by the mystic sects of the Graeco-Roman world, is one which has been much discussed in recent years.... The essential features of the [Pre-Christian Pagan] 'Mysteries' were - rites of initiation; rites of 'communion'; and a great concern as to the future life.

"We find that, by the end of the first century [A.D.], all these features were becoming prominent in Christianity.... After[!] the Apostolic age..., other elements prominent in the [pagan] 'Mysteries' made their way into Christianity: the great [sacramentalistic] stress laid on the Sacraments; and the intercessory power of the priesthood."

459. Pagan Paedocommunionism did not begin really to pollute the Church till A.D. 250f

Now all of the extant writings of the Pre-250 A.D. Early Church Fathers - especially the Didachee, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Origen, Commodian, Dionysius of Alexandria, and the Syrian Didaskalia -- at least implicitly presuppose both catechizing and the attainment of adolescence as prerequisites for admission to the Lord's Supper.<sup>1287</sup> Thus: the Didachee;<sup>1288</sup> Justin Martyr's First Apology;<sup>1289</sup> Irenaeus's *Adversus*

Haereses;1290 and Clement's Paedagogue1291 and his Stromata.1292

This continued also in the 3rd century A.D. That can be seen from: Hippolytus's Heads;1293 Origen's Commentary on Matthew;1294 his Commentary on John;1295 his Homily on Judges;1296 Commodian's Instructions;1297 the Syrian Didaskalia;1298 and Eusebius's Church History.1299

In its article The Lord's Supper, the 1951 Encyclopedia Americana declares1300 that even "after the third century...the Lord's Supper was...celebrated separately in the churches in such a way that all present could partake, with the exception of Catechumens." The latter were those who were still being catechized and who had thus not yet been admitted to manducate thereat.

Paganism, then, perverted the sacramentology of the People of God - from time to time. During the Older Testament period, we see this: in Balaam's sacrifices; in Ahab's Jezebel-ian syncretism; and in the cakes baked for the pagan goddess called 'the Queen of Heaven' on wood which Jeremiah saw being gathered by children even in Jerusalem. Jeremiah 7:16-19. During the Newer Testament period, the carnal church at Corinth became at least infected with the pseudo-communionistic and generally-paedocommunionistic Pagan-Greek 'Mystery Religions' - and needed cleansing by the Apostle Paul. First Corinthians 10:7-22; 11:20-29f; 12:1-3.

After Cyprian, (re-)paganizing Paedocommunion was increasingly tolerated in the Church. After Augustine, it was institutionalized. And by the time of John of Damascus it had widely been extended in the Oriental Church even to unweaned and uncatechized babies. Though the additional heresy of transubstantiation (in both the Eastern and the Western Church) had no impact on the minimum age for manducating the Eucharist - even Rome later permitted 'Child Communion' (but not 'Infant Intinction' as did the Orient).

It thus remained one of the tasks of the Protestant Reformation to abolish even 'Child Communion' á la Late-Mediaeval Romanism. In that way, the 'Re-form-ed Church' was returned to the Biblical teaching of the Holy Table for catechized 'adolescents and adults only.'

#### 460. Pre-Communion Catechism in the Holy Scriptures

So then, there are no normative or prescriptive references at all to 'Child Communion' in either the Older Testament or the Newer Testament. Yet there are plenty of references there which indicate that the Sacrament of Communion, viz. the Passover and the Eucharist as its fulfilment, were given only to catechized adults after their 'confirmation.' Exodus 12:3f,21f,26f,37f,48f ; Numbers 9:6f ; Psalms 15 & 24:3f; 34:13-15; Proverbs 22:6; Luke 2:41-47f & 22:14-16; First Corinthians 3:2; 11:12-29; 13:11; 14:20; 16:13; and Hebrews 5:12 to 6:5f & 13:4-16.

In all probability, such 'confirmation' would have been indicated by the laying on of hands. Colossians 2:11 cf. Genesis 17:25f & 48:9-20; Exodus 12:3-26 & 19:6 & 29:10; Leviticus 1:4; 3:2; 4:4,15; 8:12-26; 16:21; 24:14; Acts 8:12-28; 9:12-18; 19:1-6; First Timothy 4:14; 6:11-21; Second Timothy 1:6; and Hebrews 2:3-4 & 5:12 to 6:2. See too Church History's 'Confirmed' Catechized Communicants, in Addendum B below.

As we shall very soon demonstrate, there are no references at all to 'Child Communion' - but plenty of references to 'Adult Communion' - in the Early Church Fathers before 250 A.D. In that period too, there are also implicit suggestions that no Communicants were small children. For all Communicants both then and later first needed to be catechized and then 'confirmed' before they were admitted to the Lord's Table. Interestingly, this covers a period of almost two centuries after the completion of the canonical books of the New Testament - and, indeed, also of the entirety of the Holy Scriptures.

On the other hand, catechizing in Older Testament times was given to the infantly-circumcised covenant child - before he would be admitted to the Passover Table (not before just after attaining adolescence). In later Judaic times from perhaps 180 A.D. onward, catechizing before admission to eat of the Passover was required not only (as previously) of Jews but thenceforth (and novelly) of Jewesses too. Only after A.D. 220, did some of the more liberal Rabbinical Judaists (but none of the more conservative Karaite Jews) increasingly begin to give the Passover also to their uncatechized children (yet never to their unweaned babies).

Since Calvary, during the four centuries between the Apostles and Augustine, catechizing was given by the Church's Officers also to the infantly-baptized covenant child (not before his or her adolescence) - before he or she would be admitted to the Lord's Supper (which at the death of Jesus had replaced the Passover). Such catechizing also preceded even the Older Testament's pre-circumcisional training - and later the Newer Testament's pre-baptismal training - of all those who had been conceived and born outside the covenant of grace (or inside the covenant yet who wrongly had been denied Baptism as the Sacrament of initiation in their infancy).

Now in Holy Scripture itself, there is very much evidence first of pre-circumcisional catechizing and later of pre-baptismal catechizing. Ipso facto, this in itself evidences a fortiori also ongoing pre-communional catechizing as regards admission first to the Passover and later to the Lord's Supper which replaced it.

As regards the Older Testament, compare: Genesis 17 & 22; Exodus 12 & 18; and Luke 2 & 22; etc. This is seen also in the Psalter (Psalms 15 & 24:3f & 34:12); in the Proverbs (22:6 & 29:17f cf. Ecclesiastes 11:9-10 & 12:1,12-13); and in Isaiah (7:14f & 28:9f & 33:14-22); etc.

The same applies also to the Newer Testament. See there the interesting catechetical cases: of Jesus Himself (Luke 2:21-47f); of the proselytes of the Pharisees (Matthew 23:15 cf. 21:21-24 & 22:3); of the proselytized Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:30-37); of Timothy (Acts 16:1-3 cf. Second Timothy 1:5f & 3:15f & First Timothy 6:16-21); of Thyatira's Lydia (Acts 16:14,15,40 cf. Revelation 2:18-24); of the Philippian jailor (Acts 16:30-34); of Apollos (Acts 18:24f); of Theophilus (Luke 1:3-4); and also of the Hebrew Christians (Hebrews 5:12 to 6:2 & 10:22f & 13:10-16); etc.1301

#### 461. Pre-Communion Catechism among the Apostolic Fathers in general

The Apostolic Fathers were those Early-Patristic Theologians who personally knew, and learned from, the Apostles themselves. Such include Clement of Rome (mentioned in the New Testament at Philippians 4:3); Ignatius of Antioch; and perhaps also the writer(s) of the Didachee alias The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. Their own teaching, in turn - was soon reflected also by the Apologists (such as Justin Martyr of Samaria, Athenagoras of Athens, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenaeus of Smyrna and Lyons, and Tertullian of Carthage, etc.).

Very soon after the completion of the infallible because God-inspired Holy Scriptures, Clement's First Epistle to the Corinthians appeared - written from Rome, circa 71-95 A.D. Though uninspired, it nevertheless imparts valuable catechetical insights.

The same is true of the 97f A.D. Didachee, alias the document known as The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. Even if not authored by one or more of the Apostles themselves - probably at least its gist was written certainly by one or more of the Apostolic Fathers.

Further, already before the middle of the second century A.D., also the Apostles' Creed had been standardized (very substantially) as the basic Catechism of the Church.<sup>1302</sup> Indeed, Justin Martyr's Apology too is definite documentary evidence of the flourishing condition of the early Catechumenate.<sup>1303</sup>

As Rev. Professor Rev. Dr. A.C. McGiffert (formerly of Cincinnati's Lane Theological Seminary) pointed out: "It was the custom from a very early period to cause the candidate...to go through a certain course of training.... By the third century, the system of catechetical instruction was a highly developed thing, extending commonly over two to three years....

"Candidates...were then known as Catechumens." Over their course of instruction they had to learn and to understand a creed.

"Such a creed was in use in the [Pre-Romish] Roman Church before the middle of the second century.... It formed the basis of what we know as The Apostles' Creed."<sup>1304</sup>

In fact, this "three years" of catechizing under supervision of the Church's Officers, was simply a continuation of the Hebrews' instruction of covenant children from ten to thirteen years of age for admission to manducation at the Passover - once that course of preparation had been completed. See: Exodus 12:3-26f; Proverbs 22:6; Aboth 5:21; Luke 2:40-47; Clement of Alexandria;<sup>1305</sup> The Apostolic Constitutions VIII:4:32; and Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion.<sup>1306</sup>

462. Clement of Rome implicitly opposed Paedocommunion as well as 'Weekly-Communion'

It is true that the Apostle Paul's A.D. 57f associate Clement of Rome does not specifically mention the Eucharist. Yet he indeed implies (certainly no later than 95 A.D.) that the Newer Testament's Minister of the Word and Sacraments - just like the Older Testament's Priest - is first carefully to examine those who would communicate.

Explains Clement: "It behooves us to do all things in order, which the Lord has commanded us to perform at stated times [cf. First Corinthians 3:2 & 11:20f & 14:20 & 14:40]. He has enjoined offerings and service to be performed; and that, not thoughtlessly" by thoughtless babies.

"They are not offered in any place, but only at the altar before the temple [viz. in Jerusalem, during the Pre-Calvary times of the Older Testament]. That which is offered, is first carefully examined by the High Priest and the Ministers already mentioned." 1307 Cf. too at First Corinthians 11:28-32 and at Second Corinthians 13:5.

The above quotation appears in Clement of Rome's First Epistle to the Corinthians (compare at 11:28). It very definitely and strongly militates against Paedocommunionism.

Yet for the rest, there are no explicit references at all to the Lord's Supper in the extant writings of Clement of Rome. And that, in spite of the fact that one might perhaps have expected such in his First Epistle to the Corinthians (in light of the explicit or implicit eucharistic material at First Corinthians 3:2 & 5:7 & 10:21f & 11:20f & 13:11 & 14:20 & 16:13).

If anything, however, this evidences the anti-sacramentarianism of the first of these Apostolic Fathers. It therefore testifies against the later notions of both Paedocommunion and 'Weekly Communion' which today often go hand in hand together.

[For the approximately 350 A.D. 'Pseudo-Clement' - see later below. That Pseudo-Clement, the modern Paedocommunionist Rev. Mr. Chris Keidel apparently confuses 1308 either with the above Non-Paedocommunionist (the earlier Clement of Rome mentioned in the Bible at Philipians 4:3), or alternatively with the antipaedocommunionistic A.D. 220 Clement of Alexandria.]

463. The Didachee taught the catechizing of covenant children as well as adult converts

The circa 97 A.D. so-called Didachee (alias The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles) seems to have been derived, at least as to its format, from an ancient Hebrew Catechism or Catechisms. It is possible that it might not have been authored by one of the Apostles themselves. Yet in that case, at least the pith of it would then have been written probably by one or more of the Apostolic Fathers.

The Didachee itself seems to have been used as a Catechism for instructing both Hebrew-Christian and Gentile-Christian youth, raised in Christ's Church, for admission to His Communion Table. Yet this document, also known as The Lord's Teaching through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations (alias the Gentiles) - cf. Matthew 28:18f - was used especially in the catechetical instruction of recent converts from Paganism.

Thus, also the Didachee links up with and continues the Pre-Incarnational Older Testament custom of catechizing both covenant children as well as the children of proselytes, toward their adolescence. Cf.: Exodus 12:3f, 26f, 37f, 43-49; Proverbs 22:6; Aboth 5:21; Luke 1:3f & 2:40-47; Acts 16:1-3 & 18:25 & 21:21 & 21:24 & 22:3; Romans 2:18; First Corinthians 14:19; Galatians

1:15f & 6:6a & 6:6b & 6:6c; Philippians 3:5f ; First Timothy 4:14 & 6:12 & 6:21; Second Timothy 1:2-6 & 3:14-17; and Hebrews 5:12 to 6:5 & 10:23.

The first six chapters of the Didachee were indeed intended for all those who needed elementary instruction in the Christian Faith - though they are targeted especially on Gentile Catechumens. The last chapters, dealing with Baptism and the Eucharist, are intended for the instruction of all Christians - whether of Hebrew or of Gentile extraction.

The Didachee implores the Lord: "Let no one eat or drink of Your Thanksgiving [alias 'Eucharist'] - except they who have been baptized into the Name of the Lord! For concerning this also, the Lord has said, 'Give not that which is holy to the dogs!' (Matthew 7:6).... If any one is holy - let him come! If any one is not so, let him repent!"<sup>1309</sup>

All these words are clearly at variance with Marcus Booker's Spermocommunion and Zygotocommunion. They are at variance too with James B. Jordan's Uterocommunion á la the fetal Samson - and also with the pagan practice of postnatal Paedocommunion.

Especially the above words 'Give not that which is holy to the dogs!' (Matthew 7:6), are of great significance. For they are specifically referred to in appropriate antipaedocommunionistic footnotes within the clearly antipaedocommunionistic<sup>1310</sup> Westminster Standards.

There, one finds a very clear statement<sup>1311</sup> as regards "the Lord's table" that also the "ignorant...cannot without great sin against Christ...be admitted thereto." Too, the Standards also teach that "any who profess their faith" but yet "are found to be ignorant...may and ought to be kept from that Sacrament."

Jesus Himself thus said: "Don't give that which is holy, to the dogs!" Matthew 7:6. Nay more. He also said that it was inappropriate for anyone to take the covenant people's "bread and to cast it to the dogs" - even if one such 'dog' should be a faithful Canaanitess.

On the other hand, that was and is in order - when "dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Matthew 15:22-27. So, provided faithful Catechumens (and perhaps even faithless Pagans) do not partake of the bread on the Lord's Table - they are quite free non-sacramentally to eat of the breadcrumbs, once they have fallen off the Table of those partaking of the Supper itself.

Similarly, also uncatechized covenant children - after the administration of the Sacrament - were free to eat of the left-overs that fell from both the Passover Table and the Eucharistic Meal. Indeed, even church-mice and maggots were and are free to eat of the bread-crumbs and of any other left-overs - after the human manducators had finished feasting at the Lord's Supper.

Significant too are all of the ethical instructions given by the Didachee to the Catechumens awaiting admission to the Lord's Supper. It urges them all: to 'fast for them that persecute you' (1:3 cf. 8:1); to 'not commit murder, adultery, paederasty, fornication, witchcraft, abortion, nor infanticide' (2:2 cf. 5:1-2); to 'teach your son or your daughter the fear of God' (4:9); and to tithe 'the products of wine-press and threshing-floor' (13:3).

Now infants and toddlers and all pre-adolescents would be incapable of performing such fastings, recitations, and tithings; incapable of committing adultery, paederasty, fornication, abortion and infanticide; and certainly incapable of teaching the fear of God to the children they were still incapable of even generating. This is why the great German Church Historian and Patrologist Rev. Professor Dr. Adolf von Harnack<sup>1312</sup> is undoubtedly quite correct where he traces parts of the Didachee to an earlier Pre-Christian Catechism for the conversion of adult Gentile proselytes to the Older Testament Hebrew religion. Compare: Exodus 12:3f,26f,37f,43-49; Proverbs 22:6; Aboth 5:21; and Luke 2:40-47.

464. Didachee taught 'Careful Communion' whenever - not 'Sandwich Snacks each Sunday'!

Once admitted to the Holy Table, Communicants were and are (quite rightly) to 're-repent.' That is to say, they were and are to turn again from recent sins, and to re-dedicate themselves afresh to the Lord - each time before they thereafter re-commune at the Lord's Supper. Yet the Didachee nowhere teaches 'Weekly Communion' - such as certain modern(istic) circles flippantly and often, though quite falsely, allege that it does.

For Didachee 14:1 does not say: "Gather yourselves together and break bread on every first day of the week!" Nor does it even say that eucharizing should occur specifically on the Lord's Day of the Lord's Supper or kata kuriakeen heemeran de Deipnon Kuriou and on no other day of the week or the month or the year but that.

Still less does the Didachee here state that the Lord's Supper was then held on every Lord's Day or kata heemeran kuriakeen hekasteen. This 'apocryphal' word hekasteen - meaning "each" and/or "every" - was erroneously (and indeed also sacramentalistically) only much later fabricated and inserted into at least one copy of the text. That was done, apparently in a clumsy Mid-Patristic attempt to suggest that the idea of a eucharistic action every Lord's Day - alias a ritualistic manducation at all of the Sunday Meetings of the Church - had devolved from the Apostolic Fathers if not even from the Apostles themselves.

Such a notion, then - was imported into the text by later ritualistic Weekly Communionists. Probably they falsified the earlier reading of the Didachee at this point in at least one later copy of that work, and sacramentalistically thus tried to alter its original meaning.

Thus they attempted to make the text teach their own later 'Weekly Communionism' - by inserting into it the indeed 'weekly' word "every" alias hekastos/hekaste from First Corinthians 16:2. Yet in that Biblical verse, the word does not refer to any weekly Eucharist at all - but instead to weekly contributions toward church collections.

Least of all does the Didachee at 14:1 itself say - on every first day of the week [or kata mian heemeran hekasteen tou sabbatou], gather yourselves together to break bread! Instead, Didachee 14:1f actually says "kata kuriakeen de Kuriou." This probably implies "kata kuriakeen [heemeran] de [Deipnon] Kuriou" - referring back to Acts 20:6f; First Corinthians 5:6f & 11:20-25; and Revelation 1:10.

It is very significant that the parallel passage in the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles (7:2:30), on the weekly celebration of the Lord's Day, makes no reference at all to the Eucharist thereon. Also the Didachee 14:1f itself would suggest that the Lord's Supper - whether celebrated annually (like the Passover Sacrament), or quarterly (like the Old Testament Feasts collectively) - was usually so observed precisely in conjunction with the regular Sunday Sabbath weekly worship service (and therefore on a weekly Lord's Day). But it would not suggest weekly eucharizing every Sunday. Still less would it suggest mandatory eucharizing every week, either with or without manducation by infants or toddlers - as is sometimes modern(istical)ly misalleged.

The whole passage thus means the following: "On the Lord's [Day] of the Lord's [Supper]" - viz. on that Lord's Day on which the Lord's Supper is celebrated - "gather yourselves together and break bread and give thanksgiving - after having confessed your transgression [cf. the Didachee 14:4], so that your offering may be pure [cf. Romans 12:1; First Corinthians 16:2; Philippians 2:17; Hebrews 13:15; First Peter 2:5]! But let no one that is at variance with his fellow come together with you, until they be reconciled - so that your sacrifice not be profaned [cf. First Corinthians 10:20f & 11:25-34]!"

"For this is what was spoken by the Lord [cf. Malachi 1:11-14]: 'In every place..., offer to Me a pure sacrifice! For I am a great King,' says the Lord, 'and My Name shall be great among the nations!'" Thus the Didachee 14:1-3 - cf. too the 'Longer Title' of the Didachee and Revelation 15:4.

What, then, are the key thoughts in the last paragraph, anent manducating at the Lord's Supper? They are these following phrases: "after having confessed your transgression"; "so that your offering may be pure"; "let no one that is at variance with his fellow come together with you until they be reconciled"; "so that your sacrifice not be profaned"; and "offer to Me a pure sacrifice!"

Very significantly, the last words above in the Didachee (14:1-3) anent breaking bread together at the Lord's Supper (as a "pure sacrifice"), are then immediately followed by the words: "Therefore, appoint for yourselves Overseers and Deacons worthy of the Lord."

This is reminiscent of the fact that not only the recipients but also especially the distributors of that Supper need to be worthy (cf. First Corinthians 11:27-29). Such persons, the Didachee then goes on to say, need to be tested or "proved" - indicating, we think, the need for passing a test alias an examination before being admitted to manducation at the Lord's Supper as well as to installation into Church Office.

Indeed, the Didachee next says: "Reprove one another!" Then it warns that "every one that acts amiss" (astochêin) - may not even speak, nor hear anything from you, until he repents." Didachee 15:1-3.

Strikingly, this very word astochêin was employed by the Holy Spirit also in First Timothy 1:6 & 6:21 and Second Timothy 2:18. Indeed, the very context at First Timothy 6:21 - cf. 6:12-21 - is precisely one's post-catechismal profession of faith.



For, as Paul there infallibly urges: "Keep on fighting the good fight of faith! Keep laying hold of everlasting life, unto which you have also been called and have professed a good profession in front of many witnesses.... Preserve that which has been committed to your trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called! For some, [after] professing, have erred [or 'gone amiss'] concerning the faith."

Without exception, all of these eucharistic phrases clearly militate against Paedocommunion. For all uncatechized and pre-adolescent Israelites were precluded from offering at the sacrifice of the Passover and all other Sacrifices. Indeed, the Eucharist had now replaced that Passover and those Sacrifices.

It is, of course, true that the Didachee certainly describes the very process of the pre-baptismal catechizing of adult converts from Paganism. Yet this applies, *mutatis mutantis*, also to the pre-communional catechizing of pre-teenage covenant children earlier baptized in infancy.

For the Didachee was doubtlessly used also for preparing infantly-baptized covenant children, catechetically, for their first-ever Communion Service manducation. That seems to have been done right after their 'Profession of Faith' (on reaching teenage). This underlines the rôle of the Didachee in showing the link between the Old Testament practice continued also in the New.

With this one should compare the remark of even the maverick yet very learned Church Historian Dr. Joseph Bingham, in his famous book *Antiquities of the Christian Church*. An eclectic Anglican expelled from Oxford's University College for deological heresy in 1695, Bingham was clearly no Antipaedocommunionist - and, indeed, sometimes advocates Paedocommunionism. Yet he nevertheless very rightly stated that the children of believing parents, baptized in infancy, "were admitted as Catechumens" - with a view to their being prepared for admission to the Lord's Table only after, and only after, they had become "capable of learning."<sup>1313</sup>

#### 465. Ignatius of Antioch taught Confirmation Before Communion (after age twelve?)

Ignatius of Antioch is sometimes alleged to be the little child whom Jesus placed in the midst of His Apostles in Matthew 18:2. However, a more credible tradition viz. that Ignatius and his fellow Apostolic Father Polycarp were both fellow-disciples of the Apostle John - is in no way inconsistent with anything in the epistles of either of those Apostolic Fathers.<sup>1314</sup>

Declares Canon E.C. Ratcliffe, Vice-Principal of Westcott House in Cambridge, in his article (on the Eucharist) in the 1929 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:<sup>1315</sup> "Ignatius of Antioch (circa A.D. 108) insists that the Eucharist, to be genuine (*bebaia*)" alias 'confirm-atory' (cf. Second Corinthians 1:21f & Hebrews 2:3), "must 'be celebrated by the Bishop or by one whom he appoints' (Smyrn. 8:1).... The Ignatian conception of the local church, is the [Hebrew] Chaburah - extended and adapted to its extension.... The term *Agapee* which Ignatius used for Eucharist (Smyrn. 8:2) - is the Greek equivalent of Chaburaah."

However, this in itself excludes the possibility of both 'Infant Communion' and 'Child

Communion' etc. For, as previously seen, the sacramentally-communing Hebrew Chaburaah (or Chebraah) at the Passover Communion - consisted of catechized adults alone. Luke 22:1-14f.

Furthermore, any ('infantile' alias 'childish') confusion of the unmandated 'Fellowship Feed' or Agapee-meal of the Christian Congregation with her mandated and distinctly-different Holy Communion Service - or any amalgamation of those two practices into one - stirs up the wrath of God against the whole Congregation. See: First Corinthians 10:16-22 & 11:20-34; Second Peter 2:1,12-16 & 3:1-3,15-18; Jude 3-4,11-12; and Revelation 2:14,20 & 19:9.

In Ignatius's Epistle to the Magnesians, there might very well be a clue that adolescence alias the attainment of at least twelve is the minimum age for admission to the Lord's Table and/or to the Eldership when reaching maturity - being the very time at which Solomon said one's beard begins to grow. Proverbs. 22:6. For one reads in the longer version of Ignatius's Magnesians at its chapter three:

"Now it behooves you not to despise the age of your Overseer - but to yield him all reverence.... Daniel the wise, at twelve years of age, became possessed of the divine Spirit - and convicted the Elders who in vain carried their grey hairs, of being false accusers.... Samuel also, when he was but a child [of twelve?] reproved Eli who was ninety years old - for giving honour to his sons rather than to God [Daniel 13:52 (Apocrypha)]....

"Solomon too..., being made king at twelve years of age, gave the terrible and difficult judgment in the case of the two women concerning their children [First Kings 3:10].... Timothy the Christ-bearer was young [though certainly then at least twelve years of age]. But hear what his teacher writes to him [First Timothy 4:22]: 'Let no man despise your youth!'.... It is becoming [or it behooves], therefore, that you too should be obedient to your Overseer!"

Likewise also the great Westminster Assembly divine Dr. John Lightfoot - even in connection with Christ's admission to the Passover around that same age. Luke 2:41f.

Comments Lightfoot on Jesus' becoming twelve years old and then "according to the custom of the Feast" Himself going up to attend the "Passover" in Jerusalem: "Christ being now twelve years old...applies Himself to His proper work...to be about His Father's business."

So too the author of Proverbs 22:6. For, adds Dr. John Lightfoot, "Solomon when 'twelve years old' ...judged between two women [cf. this same word "judged" in respect of manducation at the Lord's Supper in First Corinthians 11 at verse 31f].... Ignatius the Martyr's Epistle to the Magnesians." Thus Lightfoot.1316

In chapter five of his Epistle to the Ephesians, and apparently mindful of the meaning of the word "man" in the Passover passage Exodus 12:3 where it describes a "mature" person - Ignatius of Antioch states: "Let no man deceive himself! If any one be not within the altar - he is deprived of the bread of God."

In chapter fourteen, Ignatius soon goes on to say: "No man making a profession of faith keeps on committing sin.... Those who profess themselves to be Christians, shall be recognized by their

conduct. For there is not now a demand for mere profession, but that a man be found continuing in the power of faith to the end."

Here, then - in chapter five and fourteen of Ignatius's Epistle to the Ephesians - there is no Paedocommunion at all. For "profession of faith" - precisely when a "man" - was required.

In chapter sixteen, Ignatius adds: "What communion has truth with falsehood; or righteousness with unrighteousness; or true doctrine with that which is false?" All of which clearly means that each would-be eucharizer first needs to learn the "true doctrine" - before he can (as a "man") be permitted "within the altar."

Similarly in chapter four of his Epistle to the Philadelphians, Ignatius states: "There is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup into the unity of His blood; one altar." The longer recension adds: "One loaf also is broken to all" the Communicants.

Indeed, as Rev, Dr. A. Cleveland Coxe (the editor of Ignatius in the Eerdmans edition of the Ante-Nicene Fathers) points out, "one cup is distributed among them all. There is but one altar" - viz. an altar only for 'adolescents' and 'post-adolescents' - "for the whole Church."

Continued Irenaeus: "Wives, you must be subject to your husbands; and you virgins [of marriageable age, must be subject] to Christ in purity - not regarding marriage as an abomination, but desiring that which is better not for the reproach of wedlock but for the sake of meditating on the Law.... I pray that, being found worthy of God, I may be found...at the feet of [the adults] Abraham and Isaac and Jacob!..."

"Fathers, bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and teach them the Holy Scriptures and also trades - so that they may not indulge in idleness! Now [it] says, 'A righteous father educates [children] well; his heart shall rejoice in a wise son' [Proverbs 23:24]."

Compare with the above quotation from Proverbs 23:24, also its non-prepubescent verses 25f & 31: "Your father and your mother shall be glad, and she who bore you shall rejoice. My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways! For a whore is a deep ditch.... Don't look at the wine when it is red!"

What then? Instead, in the words of Proverbs 22:6 in the previous chapter: "Catechize a lad in the way in which he should go - then, when his beard begins to grow, he shall not depart from it!"

All of the above clearly implies that the Eucharist is intended for godly adolescents/adults alone. Hence and thence the Antipaedocommunionist Rev. Dr. Leonard Coppes has correctly concluded<sup>1317</sup> that "Ignatius...maintained that only those who had first made a public profession of faith should partake of it.... To Ignatius, the Lord's Supper - when limited to those who had made profession of faith - was a true and sanctifying sacrament...."

"Since Ignatius did not accept an *ex opere operato* concept of the Sacraments - he must have assumed that the participants had previously made a public profession of faith.... Furthermore, since the 'profession of faith' is not the actual partaking of the Lord's Supper itself [see in his *To the Ephesians 14*] - participants must have confessed their faith previously and publicly."

Here, the Paedocommunionist Leithart could only snidely sneer:1318 "Coppes...concludes that 'Prior to the third century...it appears that Ignatius and all the others held that only those who had made a credible profession of faith were to be admitted to the Lord's table'(p. 43).... It is important to note that many patristic scholars believe the evidence points in the other direction."

Who, then, are these "many patristic scholars" to whom Leithart here refers? His footnote here simply states: "See Keidel, *Is the Lord's Supper for Children?*, p. 301, fn. 1" etc.

And who is this "Keidel" - whom Peter Leithart cites as apparently being in the very forefront of those whom Leithart calls "many patristic scholars"? It is the very same person whom we have already seen above - paedocommunionistically went and got the Apostle Paul's associate the famous A.D. 57-95 non-paedocommunionistic Apostolic Father Clement of Rome confused either with the antipaedocommunionistic A.D. 220 Clement of Alexandria or with the approximately 350 A.D. Pseudo-Clement!

Thereafter, Leithart - though apparently not including himself among those 'many patristic scholars' - adds:1319 that "Coppes's argument...does not prove his case.... It casts doubt on the certainty of his conclusions.... This statement cannot be taken as proof that Ignatius was a Baptist," and "neither can it be taken as proof that he did not admit children to the table."

We shall simply let Ignatius himself, as previously quoted, here respond to the prejudiced Paedocommunionist Leithart. Held Ignatius: "Daniel the wise, at twelve years of age, became possessed of the divine Spirit"; "Samuel also"; and "Solomon too" gave a "difficult judgment" when "twelve years of age." Indeed, Lightfoot compared these statements of Ignatius to Jesus' first attendance at the "Passover" when twelve years old.

Too, continued Ignatius: "If any one be not within the altar - he is deprived of the bread of God." For first, not a child but a "man" must make "a profession of faith." Indeed: "What communion hath truth with falsehood...or true doctrine with that which is false?" For : "One loaf also is broken to all [the Communicants], and one cup is distributed among them all."

Here, "them all" clearly includes "wives" and "virgins" of "marriageable age" - who, like Ignatius the adult, may be "found worthy of God." Such are indeed different to pre-pubescent "children" whom their fathers must still "bring up" and "teach them the Holy Scriptures and also trades" - and whom they must "educate" also as regards how to avoid a "whore" and how to use "wine." Proverbs 23:24-31.

On the basis of the above, only one conclusion can follow. It is this. The views of Ignatius himself - and the views about Ignatius: of the Westminster Assembly's Commissioner the great Rev. Dr. John Lightfoot; the views of the Ante-Nicene Fathers' Ignatian editor Dr. A.C. Coxe; the views of the Encyclopaedia Britannica's article on the Eucharist by Vice-Principal E.C. Ratcliffe; and the views of today's careful Eucharistic Theologian Rev. Dr. Leonard Coppes - are all very clearly antipaedocommunionistic. As such, they are all quite irreconcilable with the novel and rash views about Ignatius of the pro-paedocommunionistic Peter Leithart.

466. Pliny knew of only non-adulterous adults manducating at Communion Services

The 112 A.D. evidence given by the Pagan Roman Pliny, the Imperial Governor of Bythinia 1320 - is altogether unfavourable to 'Paedocommunionists' in general and to 'Infant Communionists' in particular. That is so, regardless as to whether Pliny was there referring to observations regarding manducation by Christians of the non-sacramental Agapee-Meal - or alternatively of the Sacrament of the Eucharist - or of both.

For Pliny's evidence clearly presupposes maturity (and the ability to commit or to refrain from committing 'mature' sins such as adult-ery) on the part of the Christian Communicants. Furthermore, as to frequency, the Pagan Pliny does not state that the early Christians of Bythinia partook 'of good food' in public every week. He simply says they did so - whenever they did so - only 'on a certain fixed day.'

The Christians in his Province, wrote Governor Pliny to his Pagan Emperor Trajan, "were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light. That was when they sang, in alternate verses, a hymn to Christ as to 'a god' [!]."

They then "bound themselves by a solemn oath not to [do] any wicked deeds; never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery; never to falsify their word; nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up. After this, it was their custom to separate, and then re-assemble later in order to partake of good food (ad capiendum cibum) - but food of an ordinary and innocent kind."

This latter statement is perhaps - if not even probably - referring to the celebration of the Eucharist. If not, it would then perhaps otherwise be referring to the Agapee Love-Feast of the Early-Christian Church. Cf.: First Corinthians 5:7-11; 10:7-28; 11:20-24; 16:1-3; Second Peter 2:13-22; Jude 12-18.

However, Pliny's passage clearly precludes 'transubstantiation.' Moreover, with its very clear references against fraud and adult-ery etc., it no way leaves room for 'Infant Communion' - or even for 'Child Communion.'

467. Shepherd Hermas said only mature actions entitled Christians to receive the 'second seal'

At least some of the (A.D. 120-60) writings known as The Pastor alias The Shepherd of Hermas may very well originally have been written by that Hermas named by the Apostle Paul in Romans 16:14. At any rate, the above writing so called - was esteemed very highly by the Church in the second century A.D.

Although it contains no direct references to the Eucharist, it indeed contains many direct references to the initiatory Sacrament of Baptism. Furthermore, in its references to "Seals" - it seems to refer indirectly also to the Second Sacrament and Seal of Holy Communion.

Before dealing with those "Seals" - Hermas first lists<sup>1321</sup> 'Twelve Commandments.' Most of them - such as those about "Faith in God" and "Giving Alms" and "Repentance" and "Putting One's Wife Away for Adultery" and "Patience" and "The Spirit and Prophets to be Tried [alias Tested]" (etc.) - could not be heeded by infants and toddlers or even by pre-adolescent children.

In his Similitudes on the Seals or the Sacraments, Hermas spells this out very clearly. He does so, especially as regards the 'Second Seal' - alias the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

There, he first condemns<sup>1322</sup> "the sharp-tempered man" who, "when gratifying his tendency, indulges in luxury; and the adulterer and the drunkard.... All these acts of luxury, are hurtful to the servants of God." Neither of those two acts here specified, are capable of being committed by pre-adolescents.

Hermas then records:<sup>1323</sup> "The Angel of the Lord...crowned the men who had returned the branches which had offshoots and some fruit, and sent them away into the tower. And the others also He sent into the tower - those namely who had returned branches that were green and had offshoots but no fruit, having given them Seals....

"The great and glorious Angel Michael [= Christ?!] is He Who has authority over this people, and governs them. For this is He Who gave them the Law into the hearts of believers. He accordingly superintends them to whom He gave it - to see if they have kept the same....

"They who returned their branches green as they had received them, are the venerable and the just[ified] and they who have walked carefully in a pure heart and have kept the Commandments of the Lord. And the rest you will know when I have examined those branches which have been planted and watered" at their [Infant] Baptism. Cf. perhaps the eucharistic word "examine" in First Corinthians 11:28!

Hermas himself then spoke to this Angel of the Lord. Hermas said:<sup>1324</sup> "Sir, show me now of what sort they are - and their abode - in order that they hearing it, who believed and received the Seal [of (either Infant or Adult) Baptism], but broke it and did not keep it whole - may, on coming to a knowledge of their deeds, repent and receive from You a Seal [of the Eucharist?] and may glorify the Lord because He had compassion upon them and sent You to re-new their spirits!"

Hermas then records what he next saw. "They who...were near to them...were hypocrites and introducers of strange doctrines and subverters of the servants of God - especially of those who had sinned - not allowing them to repent, but persuading them by foolish doctrines.... Many of them also have repented since I spoke to them - and they will still keep on repenting."

To this, the Angel of the Lord replied: "You see...that some of them have repented, and there is still remaining in them...a hope of repentance. And as many of them...as have repented, shall have their dwelling in the tower....

"On hearing My Commandments, they purified themselves, and soon repented.... But if any one relapse into strife - he will be cast out of the tower.... Life is the possession of all who keep the Commandments of the Lord!"

Finally, this Angel of Repentance explained to Hermas:1325 "Before a man bears the Name of the Son of God, he is dead. But when he receives the Seal [of initiation viz. Baptism], he lays aside his deadness.... "The Seal, then, is the water.... To them...was this Seal preached....

"Having, therefore, received the Seal [of continuation later, viz. the Eucharist?] - they had one understanding and one mind.... Their faith became one and their love one; and with the Name, they bore also the spirits of the virgins" viz. of those purified souls of marriageable age.

"In like manner also shall it be with the Church of God - after it has been purified and has rejected...the hypocrites and the blasphemers and...[those who] worship idols" and commit other such adult sins such as adultery etc.

As previously stated, there are no specific references in Hermas to the Eucharist. But the indirect and implicit references there - in respect of the use of the 'Second' Seal - all protest against any manducation at the Lord's Supper prior to the completion of catechization and admission to the Eucharist not before adolescence.

468. Justin Martyr taught education or catechization ere manducation at the Eucharist

The famous A.D. 150f Christian 'Apologist' Justin Martyr of Samaria said the following (especially of never-baptized adults just converted from Paganism):1326 "As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true - and [who] undertake to be able to live accordingly - are instructed to pray...to...God...for the remission of their sins.... They then are brought by us [to a place] where there is water....

"For in the Name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water.... Christ also said [John 3:5], 'Except you be born again, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven!' It is impossible for those who have once been born, to enter [again] into their mothers' wombs.... How those who have sinned and repent, shall escape their sins - is declared by the Prophet Isaiah [1:16-20].... He thus speaks, 'Wash yourselves!'

"At our birth, we were born without our knowledge or choice - by our parents coming together.... [Thereafter we] were brought up [compare 'catechized'].... We become the children of choice and knowledge....

"There is pronounced over him who chooses...and has repented of his sins, the Name of God the Father and Lord of the universe.... They who learn these things - are [thus] illuminated in their understandings.... Indeed, even the demons, having heard [of] this washing published by the Prophet [Isaiah 1:16-20], instigated those who enter their temples and are about to approach them with libations and burnt-offerings, also to sprinkle themselves" etc.

"But we, after we have thus [baptismally] washed him who has been convinced and who has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are

assembled...in order that we may offer hearty prayers...for ourselves and for the baptized [(and illuminated) person.... So that we may be counted worthy, now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the Commandments..., we salute one another....

“Then bread and a cup of wine is brought to the President [or Moderator] of the brethren.... And when the President has given thanks and all the people have expressed their assent - those who are called by us ‘Deacons’ give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine....

"And this ‘food’ is called among us Eucharistia.... No one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed [baptized]...and who is so living as Christ has enjoined.”

Beyond doubt, the above quite excludes all Infant Communionism and all Toddler Communionism!

For according to Justin Martyr, it is only “after” being “thus washed” that those of the “baptized” who have been “illuminated” [cf. catechized] and who have also expressed their assent" (which no infant and few of any toddler can do) and who are also found to be “good citizens and keepers of the [Ten] Commandments” - are “counted worthy.” Compare First Corinthians 11:27-29. Only then may they get the “bread and a cup of wine” in the “Eucharistia - of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach [or ‘disciple’ about] are true, and who has been washed [baptized]...and who is so living as Christ has enjoined.”

Beyond doubt, the above words would then prohibit giving the sacramental bread and wine to all uncatechized small children. For those words clearly and without exception limit eucharizing only to such a "man who believes that the things which we teach are true" - and only to such as "have expressed their assent."

Even the non-antipaedocommunionistic Anglican Bishop Jeremy Taylor agrees on this here.<sup>1327</sup> Sadly, however, Taylor then wrongly goes on to argue that infants may<sup>1328</sup> be eucharized - on the strength of his own misreading of the later Cyprian!<sup>1329</sup>

Taylor further concedes:<sup>1330</sup> "Shut the profane and unhallowed people out of doors! - so Orpheus sang [cf. Justin Martyr’s Sole Government of God 2].<sup>1331</sup> None comes to this Holy Feast but they...who are sanctified...[and] who have obedient souls [and] ears attentive to the sermons of the Gospel.... They only" - they alone "are to eat the precious food of the sacrificed lamb....

"There must be an actual faith also in every Communicant. Neither faith alone nor Baptism alone can suffice.... It must be the actual faith of baptized persons which disposes us to this Sacred Feast. For the Church gives the Communion neither to Catechumens nor to infants nor to madmen nor to natural fools....

"Catechumens [are] not admitted to the Holy Communion. Of this, besides the testimony of Justin Martyr, St. Cyril of Alexandria gives this full account: ‘We refuse to give the Sacraments to Catechumens, although they already know the truth’.... The unbaptized must not communicate. So neither will Baptism alone admit us. And therefore, infants and innocents are yet incapable."



Thus, even the inconsistent Paedocommunionist Jeremy Taylor! Indeed, elsewhere, Taylor further insists "the father's power does not extend to matters of religion and persuasions of faith."1332

In light of the above, it is amazing that the modern Paedocommunionists' premier writing on The History of Paedocommunion (by Tommy Lee) has the effrontery to claim that also "Jeremy Taylor" is among those "who believe that Paedocommunion was a common practice in the earliest days of the Ancient Church."1333 Such a statement by Tommy Lee - like the love of God itself - truly passes all human understanding!

Continued Justin: "For we do not receive these [things] as common bread and common drink. For we have been taught [cf. catechized] that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His Word..., is the 'flesh' and 'blood' of that Jesus Who was made flesh."

Note that this reference to the 'real spiritual presence' of "the 'flesh' and 'blood' of that Jesus" in the Supper - cannot imply 'transubstantiation.' This is obvious, because of the prior references above to receiving not flesh and blood but precisely "bread and a cup of wine" etc. Indeed, the Early-Patristic Lord's Supper required catechizing with a view to imparting a mature knowledge also as regards the meaning of the Eucharist. It had an entirely different character to the magical manducatory rites of the surrounding pagan religions which gave their occult ex opere operato foods even to their own toddlers and infants - and which was later absorbed by both Eastern-Orthodoxy and Romanism into their idolatrous doctrine of the mediaeval Mass.

Now Justin had indicated that Baptism is to be administered probably by "sprinkling" - and even to those who have left "their mother's wombs." On the other hand, he said the "Eucharist" is for those who have been "illuminated" - and for "no one...but the man who believes...the things which we "teach" (catechetically). Consequently, those thus admitted to "the bread and wine" - were those previously examined and then thus "found [to be] good citizens and keepers of the Commandments" - including the Seventh, relating to proper adult behaviour.

To all the above, continued Justin, it is needed that, at the Eucharist, God's mature "people assent - saying 'Amen!' Then there is a distribution...and a participation of that over which thanks have been given....

"Then, they who are well to do and willing - give what each thinks fit.... What is collected - is deposited with the President [alias the Moderator of the Session], who succours the orphans and widows." Cf. Acts 6:1-7.

The just Justin indeed pillories (paedocommunionistic) Paganism, its "temples" and its magical "libations and burnt-offerings." But as regards the Christian Eucharist - never once does Justin teach that children partook. For the "bread" and "wine" and "water" - of the Christian 'love-feasts' (as distinct from Eucharists?) - were only for "the people" who "have expressed their assent." And as regards the "Eucharistia" itself - "no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true" etc. Thus, to Justin - no Communion without catechization!

#### 469. Justin Martyr on the frequency of the Eucharist

Justin Martyr next goes on to deal with the frequency of the Eucharist. However, while indeed stating that "we afterwards continually remind each other of these things" - and also that we often do so on Sundays! - Justin does not teach that the Lord's Supper is to be held only on a Sunday.

Nor does he teach it is to be held every Sunday as such (any more than he teaches that the "water" of the other Sacrament of Baptism needs to be administered every Sunday). Still less does he teach that either Sacrament is to be celebrated every day etc. (as later hemerobaptistic and hemerocommunionistic heretics have at times wrongly insisted).

Explains Justin Martyr: "On the day called Sunday (teei tou Heeliou legomenee heemerai), all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place - and the Memoirs of the Apostles, or the Writings of the Prophets, are read.... Then, when the Reader has ceased, the President [alias the Moderator of the Session of Elders] verbally instructs [cf. catechizes], and exhorts to the imitation of good things....

"When our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought." That is. for the serving of Baptism and/or the Supper whenever necessary, from time to time. Then, "the President in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings.

"Sunday is the day on which we all hold our Common Assembly [cf. First Corinthians 16:2 and Revelation 1:10]. Because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the World [cf. Genesis 1:2f]; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead [Matthew 28:1-7].

"For He was crucified on the day before that, of Saturn [Satur-day]. And on the day after that of Saturn, which is that of the Sun - having appeared to His Apostles and Disciples [alias His 'taught ones' alias those previously 'catechized'] - He taught them these things which we have submitted to you also, for your consideration."

Recall that Justin is here addressing this Apology to the pagan Emperor Antoninus (1:1)! Hence, for the sake of intelligibility to the recipient, Justin's above use of the pagan names ('Satur-day' and 'Sun-day') - for the Jewish Sabbath and for the Christian Lord's Day.

Note also, however, that Justin is here submitting to the adult Emperor ("you also") for his "consideration" - the same "things" which he says Jesus taught to His similarly-adult "Disciples" (and certainly for their mature 'consideration' too). Here again, we have some additional incidental evidence against Paedocommunionism.

From all the above, one can probably detect the Infant Baptism (by way of sprinkling) and also the subsequent catechization of covenant children. One can also clearly discern the desirability of celebrating the Eucharist especially (if not only) on the Lord's Day.

Yet one cannot here rightly see the celebration of either Baptism or the Eucharist on every Lord's Day. Though one can here perhaps detect the celebration of the Eucharist at least on the anniversary of Easter Sunday and possibly also on the other New Testament 'Feast Days' such as Pentecost Sunday.

Throughout, however, there is no question of 'child communion' (sic) - and still less of 'infant intinction' - in Justin Martyr. For he restricts Holy Communion only to such baptizees: who have "been taught" alias 'catechized'; who have publically "expressed" their "assent" to the doctrines of Christianity; and who are old enough to be described as "good citizens."

#### 470. Justin on Baptism and the Eucharist replacing Circumcision and the Passover

We must finally consider Justin's Dialogue with Trypho. There, the good Samaritan Christian Justin, apparently while in Ephesus around the middle of the second century A.D., dialogued with a Judaist named Trypho.

Judaists had then once more been slandering Christians. So Justin asked Trypho:1334 "Have you too believed concerning us that we eat men [at our Eucharist]; and that after the Feast...we engage in promiscuous concubinage?"

Trypho the Judaist replied: "You [Christians] observe no Festivals or Sabbaths, and do not have the rite of Circumcision.... Have you not read that that soul shall be cut off from His people, who shall not have been circumcised on the eighth day?" Cf. Genesis 17:12-14.

In his response to this, Justin Martyr demonstrated the continuity between the Older and the Newer Testament. Inter alia, he showed how at Calvary Infant Circumcision had been replaced by Infant Baptism - and how the Passover only for the mature who had previously been circumcised, was there replaced by the Eucharist only for the mature who had previously been baptized.

Argued Justin:1335 "God Himself proclaimed by Moses, speaking thus: 'And circumcise the hardness of your hearts, and no longer stiffen the neck!' [Deuteronomy 10:16f].... 'Draw near hither - you lawless children [or people], seed of the adulterers!' [Isaiah 57:1-4]....

"Wash yourselves therefore! And now, become clean and put away iniquity from your souls - as God bids you be washed in this laver, and be circumcised with the true circumcision!...

"God has announced that you have forsaken Him, the Living Fountain - and dug for yourselves broken cisterns which can hold no water.... You [Judaists] who are circumcised according to the flesh, have need of our [Christian] 'Circumcision' [viz. Baptism]; but we, having the latter, do not require the former.... If it were necessary, as you suppose - God would not have made Adam uncircumcised; would not have had respect to the gifts of Abel when, being uncircumcised, he offered sacrifice; and would not have been pleased with the uncircumcision of Enoch."

The Samaritan Christian Justin Martyr then further told the Judaist Trypho:1336 "So that you

may learn that it was for the sins of your own nation and for their idolatries, and not because there was any necessity for such sacrifices, that they were likewise enjoined - listen to the manner in which He speaks of these by Amos [5:18 to 6:7]!... 'I have hated, I have despised your Feast-Days.... Though you keep on offering Me your burnt offerings and sacrifices, I will not accept them'....

"When Abraham himself was in uncircumcision, he was justified [Genesis 15:6 compare Romans 4:3-11f].... The eighth day possessed a certain mysterious import[ance, pointing to Easter Sunday as the eighth day of the week on which Christ rose from the dead]....

"The blood of Circumcision is obsolete [since Calvary], and we trust in the blood of [Christ for our] salvation.... Jesus Christ 'circumcises' [the souls of] all who will....

Justin went on:1337 "I am an uncircumcised man.... Though a man be a Scythian or a Persian - if he has the knowledge of God and of His Christ and keeps the everlasting righteous decrees - he is 'circumcised' with the good and useful Circumcision, and is a friend of God....

"He [Jehovah] said to the [Jewish] people by Malachi [1:10], one of the twelve [Minor] Prophets: 'I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord; and I shall not accept your sacrifices at your hands. For from the rising of the sun till its setting, My Name shall be glorified among the Gentiles. And in every place a sacrifice...[shall be] offered unto My Name, even a pure sacrifice. For My Name is being honoured among the Gentiles,' says the Lord, 'but you [Judaists] profane it!'....

Continued Justin: "What need, then, have I of Circumcision - I, who have been witnessed to by God? What need have I of [fleshly Circumcision as] that other 'Baptism' - I, who have been baptized with the Holy Ghost?... Do not be offended at, or reproach us with, the bodily uncircumcision with which God has created us!"

Justin Martyr continued:1338 "The offering of fine flour...which was prescribed to be presented on behalf of those purified from leprosy, was a type of the bread of the Eucharist. The celebration of which, our Lord Jesus Christ prescribed in remembrance of the suffering which He endured on behalf of those who are purified in soul from all iniquity....

"Hence God speaks by the mouth of Malachi [1:10-12]...about the sacrifices at that time presented by you. 'I have no pleasure in you,' says the Lord. 'And I will not accept your sacrifices at your hands. For from sunrise to sunset, My Name...[is to be] glorified among the Gentiles, and in every place...a pure offering...[shall be] offered to My Name.' For 'My Name is great among the Gentiles,' saith the Lord, 'but ye [Judaists like Trypho] profane it.' He [Malachi] then speaks of those Gentiles, namely us [Gentile Christians] who in every place [shall] offer sacrifices to Him. I.e. the bread of the Eucharist and also the cup of the Eucharist, affirming both that we [Christians] glorify His Name, and that you [Judaists] profane it.

"The command of Circumcision, again, bidding [the Ancient Israelites] always circumcise the children on the eighth day, was a type of the true 'Circumcision.' Thereby we are 'circumcised' from deceit and iniquity through Him Who rose from the dead on the first day after the Sabbath -

[namely through] our Lord Jesus Christ.

"For the first day after the Sabbath, remaining the first of all the days, is still called the eighth according to the number of all the days of the cycle - and [yet] remains the first.... Christ the Son of God...was proclaimed as about to come to all the World, to be the everlasting Law and the everlasting Covenant, even as the forementioned prophecies show. And we who have approached God through Him, have received not carnal but spiritual Circumcision.... And we have received it through Baptism."

Justin concluded:1339 "Accordingly, God - anticipating all the sacrifices which we [Christians] keep on offering through this Name [Hebrews 13:8-16], and which Jesus the Christ enjoined us to keep on offering - i.e. in the Eucharist of the bread and the cup, and which keep on being presented by Christians in all places throughout the World - keeps on bearing witness that they are well-pleasing to Him. But He utterly rejects those being presented by you and by those priests of yours! He says, 'And I will not accept your sacrifices at your hands! For from sunrise to sunset, My Name keeps on being glorified among the Gentiles.... But you [Judaists] keep on profaning it.'" Malachi 1:10-12.

May Hebrew Christians and Gentile Christians - unlike Judaists and Pagans - then never profane God's Holy Name! May they, like Justin, see to it that their eucharistic bread remains an "offering of fine flour...prescribed to be presented on behalf of those purified from leprosy" - by God's grace, and through an intelligently and publically professed faith in Christ! May they never adulterate their Eucharist to a faithless ritual devoid of catechetical content - like the unintelligent magical manducations of pagan Paedocommunionism!

Very significantly, even the Paedocommunionist Leithart concedes:1340 "In various passages, Justin seems to argue that faith and profession are prerequisites for admission" to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Ah yes, indeed, Mr. Leithart!

471. Theophilus and Athenagoras: no cannibalistic transubstantiation!

A fortiori, the 170 A.D. Theophilus of Antioch - as did Justin - defended Christians against the "barbarous" charge "that we eat human flesh" at the Lord's Supper. This proves not only that the early Christians did not in any sense believe in transubstantiation. It is also evidence against 'Infant Communion.'

For unweaned tiny little Christians did not and indeed could not either then or ever cannibalize on human flesh - not even metaphorically. Only adult Christians then eucharized - after there were first catechized thoroughly enough so as never even to be able to think that they were thereby transubstantiationistically 'cannibalizing.'

Theophilus also condemned those views of the paganistic Zeno and Diogenes and Cleanthes - "indicating the eating of human flesh." He repudiated the Pagan Paedocommunionist "Diogenes - who teaches children to bring their own parents in sacrifice, and [to] devour them."

He recoiled at Herodotus's narration "that among the [paedocommunionistic Pagan] Indians, the parents are eaten by their own children. Oh, the godless teaching of those who...inculcated

such things!" Indeed, he rebuked "Chrysippus" and other Pagans - because "we find, from the writings they composed, that the eating of human flesh was received among them."1341

Yet such was, of course, never the case among the Early Christians. Indeed, also the 175 A.D. Athenagoras of Athens discounts both transubstantiation and human cannibalism. Thus he has remarked: "The Maker of the World has not allotted any animal whatsoever as food to those of the same kind." As a result, Pagans were not "able to show that the flesh of man was allotted to men for food."1342

Once again, this totally repudiates transubstantiation. It does refer both to Pagans as well as to their paedocommunionizing pagan children - but not to adult Christians, nor to their children. A fortiori and au contraire, neither toddlers nor the unweaned infants of Christians ever at all fed - as did many paedocommunionistic Pagans - on the Sacrament non-transubstantiatingly symbolizing and sealing the very flesh of Christ.

#### 472. Irenaeus taught Catechism during Christian childhood - before Communion

The 185 A.D. Irenaeus was perhaps born in Syria - but probably, later, grew up in Smyrna. He was certainly yet later from Lyons in Celtic Gaul, alias Western Gaul-asia.1343 More importantly, he was one of the very first Early Church Fathers to use the technical term catechisare.1344

Irenaeus warned against the views of the Pagan-Gnostic Marcus - who gave thanks over cups in which the wine was regarded as having been transubstantiated, magically, into blood.1345 Yet very differently, Irenaeus himself saw a certain connection between the all-adult manducators of the wine at the wedding in Cana - and the later (adults-only) celebrants at the Lord's Supper.1346

On the other hand, it is conversely very significant that Irenaeus1347 indeed presupposed the Infant Baptism of covenant children. So too did Tertullian1348 (who, only after later regrettably though but temporarily lapsing into a mild form of the Pseudo-Pentecostalism of Proto-Anabaptistic Semi-Montanism, started to oppose the Paedobaptism of Primordial Presbyterianism). Indeed, the original 'Apostolic Age' Baptism of the infant children of such adults who themselves professed Christianity, was presupposed also by many other early authorities (such as Cyprian1349 and Gregory of Nazianze1350) - as well as by the 419 A.D. Council of Carthage,1351 etc.

Irenaeus discussed Jesus as our great High Priest.1352 There, he distinguished the childlike stages of immaturity - from the youthful age of inquiry, and the mature age of mastery.

Says Irenaeus of Jesus: "Being thirty years old when He came to be baptized, and then possessing the full age of a Master [Luke 3:21-23 cf. Exodus 29:21 & Numbers 4:3], He came to Jerusalem so that He might properly be acknowledged by all as a Master.... Being a Master, therefore, He also possessed the age of a Master - 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 (renascantur in Deum) - infants, and children, and boys, and youths."

As Rev. Professor Dr. A. Cleveland Coxe indicates (in his notes on Irenaeus's words *renascantur in Deum*):1353 "The reference in these words, is doubtless to Baptism." This "clearly appears from comparing Irenaeus's *Against Heresies* III:17:1. It has been remarked by Wall [Infant Baptism] and others, that we have here the statement of a valuable fact as to the Baptism of Infants in the Primitive Church."

There is, however, no such similar reference in the circa 180 A.D. writings of Irenaeus - to the giving of the Lord's Supper to any Infants or even to any Children. Nor is there any such similar reference in any other extant patristic writing before at least 250 A.D.

Irenaeus continued His discussion of Jesus Christ. Regarding our Saviour, he said: "He therefore passed through every age - becoming an infant for infants, thus sanctifying infants; a child for children, thus sanctifying those who are of this age (being at the same time made to them an example of piety, righteousness, and submission); [and] a youth for youths (becoming an example to youths, and thus sanctifying them for the Lord)."

Indeed, Jesus Christ became an example to youths precisely by never eating of the sacramental food and drinking of the sacramental wine at the Passover (as the antecedent to His Supper) - until after He had completed His catechetical course at the end of His twelfth year at His Bar Mitzvah. For Christ was the mature 'Second Adam.' Luke 2:42-47f cf. 3:23,38.

473. Irenaeus championed Catechism and Confirmation before Admission to Lord's Supper

Certainly Philip catechized the Ethiopian eunuch, even though the latter was already a mature proselyte to the Hebrew religion and well able to travel all the way from Africa to Jerusalem and even to read the Older Testament in Hebrew. Acts 8:26f. All of this seems to preclude any kind of Paedocommunion.

Indeed, Irenaeus even claims that the adult Ethiopian eunuch had (in part) been pre-catechized through reading the Older Testament Prophets. And that was even before he had met Philip.1354

Paedocommunionism, whether suitably as in Paganism or whether wrongly as in Christ's Church, always in the end seems to lead to a magical *ex opere operato* view of that ordinance. Irenaeus, however, taught the very opposite.

Wrote Irenaeus in respect of the Older Testament's Israelites:1355 "God did not need their oblation.... Samuel did ever thus speak to them: 'God does not desire whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices; but He will have His Voice to be hearkened to! Behold, a ready obedience [or faithful response] is better than sacrifice - and to hearken [is better than] the fat of rams' [First Samuel 15:22].... God desires obedience, which renders them secure - rather than sacrifices and holocausts [alias burnt-offerings] which avail them nothing towards righteousness. And [by this declaration,] He at the same time prophesies the New[er] Covenant ....

"He continues, exhorting them to what pertained to salvation: 'Wash yourselves; make

yourselves clean; take away wickedness from your hearts from before My eyes!' [Isaiah 1:11f].... He points out that it was not for this that He led them out of Egypt, so that they might offer sacrifice to Him - but that, forgetting the idolatry of the Egyptians, they should be able to hear the Voice of the Lord.... 'In these things I delight, says the Lord' [Jeremiah 9:24]; but not in sacrifices nor holocausts!"

Irenaeus also spoke directly about the Lord's Supper. Christ, said Irenaeus, 1356 "gave directions to His Disciples to offer to God the first-fruits of His own created things" - thus precluding any notion of transubstantiation. This He did, "not because He stood in need of them." But He did so - in order "that they [viz. His catechized and confirmed Disciples] might themselves be neither unfruitful nor ungrateful."

Accordingly, in the Eucharist for His Disciples, "He took that created thing - bread - and gave thanks. And [He] said, 'This is My body' (Matthew 26:26)."

Once again, this presupposes at least three post-childhood abilities. The abilities: a) to have become a Disciple, i.e. one who has been taught; b) to be able "to offer to God the first-fruits" of the labours of one's own mature hands; and c) to be capable, like the Disciples at the Last Passover and the First Lord's Supper, of having an adult understanding of the words 'This is My body' in Matthew 26:26.

Irenaeus then went on to point out that "Malachi, among the Twelve Prophets, thus spoke beforehand: "I have no pleasure in you [Older Testament Israelites]," says the Lord Omnipotent, "and I will not accept sacrifice at your hands! For from sunrise to sunset, My Name is [yet to be] glorified among the Gentiles. And in every place, incense and a pure sacrifice is [yet to be] offered to My Name. For great is My Name among the Gentiles," says the Lord Omnipotent' [Malachi 1:10f].

"This indicates in the plainest manner, by these words, that the former people [the Israelites] would indeed cease to make offerings to God - but that in every place sacrifice shall be offered to Him; and that, a pure one. And His Name is being glorified among the Gentiles!"

Significantly, Irenaeus linked Christ's Sacrament of the Eucharist inter alia also to the mature Abel's adult sacrifices (Genesis 4:4f cf. Hebrews 11:4f). "At the beginning," explained Irenaeus, "God had respect to the gifts of Abel - because he offered with singlemindedness and righteousness.... [However,] he who [like Cain] thus cherishes secret sin - does not deceive God by that sacrifice which is offered....

"Sacrifices therefore do not sanctify a man. For God stands in no need of sacrifice. But it is the conscience of the [mature!] offerer that sanctifies the sacrifice when it is pure, and thus moves God to accept [the offering]....

"For it behooves us to make an oblation to God.... In all things [we are] to be found grateful to God our Maker - in a pure mind, and in faith, without hypocrisy; in well-grounded hope, in fervent love."

Very clearly indeed, this language leaves no room at all for 'Infant Communion.' Nor does it



leave room even for 'Child Communion' before adolescence - alias the age at which the sacrificing Abel and the Cain who should have made an acceptable sacrifice became marriageable. Cf. Genesis 4:2-17.

"But," continues Irenaeus, "the [Post-Calvary Judaistic] Jews do not offer thus! For their hands are full of blood. For they have not received the Word [viz. the mature Jesus Christ], through Whom there was an [acceptable] offering to God.... But our [Christian] opinion is in accordance with the Eucharist - and the Eucharist, in turn, establishes our opinion.

"For we offer to Him His Own, announcing consistently the fellowship and union of the flesh and Spirit.... The bread [and not Christ's flesh], which is produced from the earth - when it receives the invocation of God, is no longer common bread [but dedicated bread and hence dedicated bread and not human flesh].... We make offering to Him, not as though He stood in need of it - but rendering thanks for His gift, and thus sanctifying that which has been created" (viz. bread and wine but not the Creator-Saviour Himself).

#### 474. Irenaeus's sweeping theological rationale for Mature Communion

Now the goal of all creationology, anthropology, christology, ecclesiology, sacramentology and eschatology - held Irenaeus 1357 - is "that man may finally be brought to maturity.... Could God," it might be asked, "from the beginning not have exhibited man as already teleologically-developed alias perfect?"

No! - replied Irenaeus. "For it was not possible for recently-created things to have been uncreated" or unenfoldedly-perfect right from their very beginning. To the contrary, freshly-created things were destined to unfold yet further. And they needed a considerable lapse of time, during history, so to unfold.

It is impossible that recently-created things could unchangeably have been 'uncreated' from all eternity past. It is also impossible that freshly-created things could ever at any time change from their created state into an uncreated or a (semi-)'divine' state. That could never be. And that shall never be - no, not even in the distant future.

Now this is true both of the universe as a whole as well as of man as its created crown. Once created, immature mankind (even though then indeed fallible) was quite unannihilable - and hence also unrecrutable.

Yet created mankind - even if it had never fallen - still needed to grow. It needed to unfold from its initial 'infancy' - and toward its 'future maturity.' Thus the first man Adam still needed an Eve. And both Adam and Eve then still needed to produce the whole of humanity. And that entire humanity still needs to produce the culture God enjoined it to unfold way back at Genesis 1:28f.

Explained Irenaeus of all human beings: "For this very reason, they [both then at the start and also still now] come short of the perfect." Indeed, mankind both then and now had, and still has, not yet finished unfolding teleologically.

For mankind was then, and still is, not yet the mankind which shall be (in its still-future and final state). So too, especially those who "are still infantile [like babies]...are...unaccustomed to, and unexercised in - perfect discipline" alias discipleship.

"It certainly is in the power of a mother to give strong food to her infant." But she does not do so, nor have the right to do so - "as the child is not yet able to receive more substantial nourishment..., being yet an infant [cf. Hebrews 5:12 to 6:5f]....

"For this reason our Lord...offered Himself to us...,so that we, being nourished...and...becoming accustomed to eat and drink the Word of God - may become able also to contain in ourselves the bread of immortality which is the Spirit of the Father. Thus Paul declares to the Corinthians [First Epistle to the Corinthians 3:2]: ' I have fed you with milk, not with meat. For up till now, you were not able to bear it'....

"The Apostle had the power [yet not the right] to give them [viz. infants] strong meat. For those [mature persons] upon whom the Apostles [indeed] laid hands [confirmatorily], did receive the Holy Spirit Who is the food of life [eternal].

But they [viz. infants] were not capable of receiving it. Because they had the sentient faculties of the soul still feeble and undisciplined [alias undisciplined] in the practice of things pertaining to God....

"It was for this reason that the Son of God, although He was [sinlessly] perfect, passed through the state of infancy in common with the rest of mankind. He thus partook of it not for His Own benefit, but for that of the infantile stage of man's existence."

Why then did He do all of this? Why, in His humanity, did He grow from infancy to maturity? Irenaeus says: "In order that man might become able to receive Him" (cf. Luke 2:21-27 & 2:40-52 & 3:21-23 with Luke's Acts 1:6-8 & 3:20-21 & 15:18-29 & 17:25-31).

Frankly, we believe that just about says it all. A stronger argument against Paedocommunion than the above passage from Irenaeus, is very hard to imagine.

475. Irenaeus was no protagonist of the ex opere operato to which Paedocommunion tends

Finally, we need to see that Irenaeus rejected also any ex opere operato eucharistic theory. That would include even such as also Paedocommunion ultimately tends to promote.

"In the four preceding books" of his Against Heresies, explained Irenaeus,1358 "all the heretics have been exposed.... Then I pointed out the truth...to confirm at the same time the minds of the neophytes [alias the recent converts], so that they may preserve steadfastly the faith which they have received....

"Vain indeed are those [heretics such as the Gnostics] who allege that He [Christ]only

‘seemingly’ appeared.... Vain also are the Ebionites...who remain in the old leaven of [the natural] birth.... These men reject the commixture of the heavenly wine.... Vain in every respect are they who...disallow the salvation of the flesh....

"If this [flesh] indeed were not to attain salvation - then neither did the Lord redeem us with His blood. Nor would the cup of the Eucharist [then] be the communion of His blood ; nor [would] the bread which we break [be] the communion of His body [First Corinthians 10:16].... He has acknowledged the cup (which is a part of the creation) as His Own blood, from which He bedews our blood; and He has established the bread [which is] also a part of the creation."

God became "an actual [mature] man, consisting of flesh and nerves and bones.... That [flesh of ours] which is nourished by the cup which is His blood..., receives increase from the bread which is His body.... Just as a cutting from the vine planted in the ground, fructifies in its season; or just as a corn of wheat falling into the earth..., rises with manifold increase by God’s Spirit....

"Those persons, then, who possess the earnest of the Spirit and who are not enslaved by the lusts of the flesh but are subject to the Spirit and who in all things walk according to the light of reason - the Apostle properly terms ‘spiritual’ .... And to as many as continue in their love towards God, He grants communion with Him."

As Irenaeus elsewhere seems to have declared:1359 "The Lord instituted a new oblation in the New Covenant, according to Malachi the Prophet [1:11]. For ‘from sunrise to sunset, My Name shall be glorified among the Gentiles - and in every place incense and a pure sacrifice is being offered to My Name’....

"John also declares in the Apocalypse [5:8 (cf. 8:3f)]: ‘The incense is the prayers of the saints’.... Paul exhorts us ‘to present our bodies a living sacrifice...which is your reasonable service’ [Romans 12:1]. And again: ‘Let us offer the sacrifice of praise - that is, the fruit of the lips!’ [Hebrews 13:15]....

"Those oblations are...according to the Spirit - for we must worship God ‘in spirit and in truth’ [John 4:24].... The oblation of the Eucharist is not a carnal one, but a spiritual; and in this respect it is pure. For we make an oblation to God [not of flesh but] of the bread and [not of blood but of wine in] the cup of blessing, giving Him thanks - in that He has commanded the earth to bring forth these fruits for our nourishment.

"And then, when we have perfected the oblation, we invoke the Holy Spirit - so that He may exhibit this sacrifice, both the bread the body of Christ and the cup the blood of Christ, in order that the receivers of these antitypes may obtain remission of sins and life eternal. Those persons then who perform these oblations in remembrance of the Lord, do not fall in with Jewish views but, performing the service in a spiritual manner, they shall be called ‘sons of wisdom.’"

The above statements of Irenaeus are very clearly both Proto-Reformational and indeed also Early-Church rejections of the falsehoods of Late-Mediaeval transubstantiation and Post-Mediaeval consubstantiation and mere-symbolism. They require would-be eucharistic manducators to do so “in remembrance of the Lord” (cf. too First Corinthians 11:24-29f). That precludes manducation

by infants, who obviously cannot remember what they have not yet even learned.

Irenaeus's statements here are also ringing endorsements of the true presence of Christ at His Table in the power of His Spirit - to the eye of disciplined faith (as later articulated especially by Calvin). Also as such, they implicitly again reject all forms of Paedocommunionism.

476. Earliest extant Liturgy teaches even Catechumens did not manducate at the Eucharist

The earliest liturgical document extant today - seems to be that attributed to the Apostle James. According to Neale's famous General Introduction to the History of the Holy Eastern Church, 1360 it dates from before A.D. 199 - and its gist is genuinely apostolic.

This Liturgy of St. James 1361 either necessarily or unnecessarily but certainly very clearly showed "the door" to and thus excluded from sacramental manducation even catechizing Catechumens. That it did, after the first part of the Divine Worship Service and before the Eucharist itself began.

Now all of those still-catechizing Catechumens had, of course, not yet been approved for and admitted to manducation at the Lord's Table. As such, these Catechumens were quite distinct from fully-catechized Communicants.

States that Liturgy: 1362 "Let none remain of the Catechumens, none of the unbaptized, none of those who are unable to join with us.... The door!"

Only after the 'exodus' of the Catechumens through "the door"- did the Presbyter declare to God the Father in the presence solely of the remaining (Communicant) Members: 1363 "You are holy, King of Eternity...Who made man [as an adult] from earth, according to Your Own image and likeness; Who gave him the joy of paradise.... When he transgressed Your Commandment and fell away, You did not disregard nor desert him..., and [You] afterwards sent forth Your Only-begotten Son Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ into the World - so that He by His coming might [as the adult Second Adam] renew and restore Your image.

"He, having descended from Heaven, and having become flesh by the Holy Spirit from...Mary, and having sojourned among men - fulfilled the dispensation.... And, [subsequently] being about to endure His voluntary and life-giving death by the cross, He the sinless One for us the sinners - in the night in which He was betrayed...delivered Himself up [as an adult] for the life and salvation of the World.

"Then the Presbyter holds the bread in his hand and says: 'Having taken the bread in His holy and pure and blameless and immortal hands - lifting up His eyes to Heaven and showing it to You His God and Father, He gave thanks and hallowed and broke and gave it to us His Disciples...saying...: "Take, eat! This is My body, broken for you, and given for remission of sins" ....

"Then he [the Presbyter] takes the cup and says: 'In like manner, after supper, He took the

cup. And having mixed wine and water, lifting up His eyes to Heaven and presenting it to You His God and Father, He [as the adult Second Adam] gave thanks and hallowed and blessed it and filled it with the Holy Spirit and gave it to us His [adult] Disciples, saying "You must all drink of it! This is My blood of the New Testament, shed for you.""

From the above, it is abundantly clear that this 'Liturgy of the Apostle James' excluded even all of the Catechumens and therefore certainly also the baptized but not-yet-catechized covenant children from manducating with the feasting catechized Disciples at the Lord's Table. Furthermore, the language clearly excludes both transubstantiation and mere-memorialism. Indeed, it sets forth the same doctrine of the Lord Jesus' Spirit-ual presence at His Table which was later so ably set forth particularly by the antipaedocommunionistic Dr. John Calvin himself.

477. Tertullian taught that only heretics give Communion to those merely half-catechized

The circa 200 A.D. Tertullian of Carthage was the 'Father' of Western Christianity. He too gives much information about the Catechumenate, and (like Irenaeus) uses the word catechisare ("to catechize"). He also uses the word Catechumenus (meaning "a Catechumen" alias one who is still 'being catechized' - whether such was previously baptized in infancy or thereafter or not).

On the one hand, Tertullian confesses that even unbaptized infants could believe in Christ.<sup>1364</sup> On the other hand, however, he also insisted on catechizing such infants when they became children - so that they could later be confirmed as Communicant Members.

For all would-be Communicants needed to be taught how to "discern" the real Spirit-ual presence of the Lord's body and His blood, before thereafter first coming to manducate at His Table. Otherwise, they might wrongly assume either some kind of transubstantiation on the one hand or some form of mere-memorialism regarding the elements on the other - and thus eat and drink condemnation unto themselves. First Corinthians 11:27-34.

For Jesus, Tertullian insists,<sup>1365</sup> "earnestly desired to eat the Passover with His Disciples" alias His taught ones. Indeed, "we may...not call into question the truth of the senses..., lest perchance it should be said...that the taste of the wine was different from that which He consecrated in memory of His blood."

However, among unorthodox heretics, Tertullian gravely tells us, no distinction is made between the 'Catechumen' who is still being catechized and the 'Faithful' or confirmed Christian already fully catechized and approved and confirmed as a Communicant. Among such unorthodox heretics, says Tertullian, the Catechumen is pronounced fit [to eucharize] - before he has been instructed! All come in indiscriminately to the Lord's Table among these unorthodox heretics - just as they do also among modern Neo-Paedocommunionists.

Especially in his Prescription Against Heretics - written before A.D. 200 - Tertullian strongly repudiated the opening up of the Lord's Holy Table even to half-taught Catechumens. He wants them fully taught - before being admitted by way of 'Confirmation' to the Sacrament of maturity. For otherwise, such wayward churches permitting such lax eucharistic practices - would hardly be distinguishable from heretics.

Wrote Tertullian:1366 "I must not omit an account also of the conduct of the heretics. How frivolous it is! How worldly; how merely human; without seriousness; without authority; without discipline [alias 'teaching'] - as suits their creed!

"To begin with, it is" - to such heretics - "doubtful who is a Catechumen, and who a 'Believer' [alias a Fidelis or a 'Communicant'] They all alike have access [to the Eucharist]; they hear alike; they pray alike (Quis Catechumenus, quis Fidelis - incertum est. Pariter adeunt, pariter audiunt, pariter orant)." Among such heretics, the "Catechumens are initiated [and admitted to the Holy Table] before they are instructed (Ante sunt perfecti Catechumeni quam edocti)."1367

To such heretics, Catechumens and Communicants are treated similarly. Explains Tertullian: "They all alike have access [to the Eucharist among those heretics].... That which is holy, they will cast to the dogs; and their pearls...they will fling to the swine. See Matthew 7:6."

Compare this also with the inappropriateness of anyone taking the covenant people's "bread...to cast it to the dogs." Of course, it is quite in order when at a banquet of invited human guests also their "dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Matthew 15:22-27. For there is a big difference between wrongly inviting a dog-like human to sit at the Lord's Table on the one hand - and on the other hand allowing actual dogs crouching on the floor to clean up crumbs inadvertently fallen from the meal at the table; or even giving substantial leftovers to such dogs (or dog-like Heathen or uncatechized children) after the banquet of the invited guests themselves.

We should compare the last paragraph but one above in Tertullian, also to the later Westminster Confession 29:1 & 29:8 and to the Westminster Larger Catechism 173. For both of those documents cite also Tertullian's very same verse (Matthew 7:6) - precisely in the context of properly restricting manducation at Holy Communion.1368

Continues Tertullian, not without sarcasm, regarding those heretics who permit their own unconfirmed Catechumens to eucharize: "Simplicity they would have, to consist in the overthrow of discipline [or 'teaching'].... Their 'Catechumens' are [in the heretics' own eyes] 'perfect' - before they [alias those 'Catechumens' of the heretics] are full-taught (edocti)" or fully disciplined.

"The very women of these heretics...are bold enough: to teach...; to undertake cures ; it may even be, to baptize! Their 'ordinations' are carelessly administered.... They put 'novices' in office.... Nowhere is promotion easier than in the camp of the rebels, where the mere fact of 'being there' is a foremost 'service.' And so it comes to pass that...today, he is a 'Presbyter' [sic!] who tomorrow is a layman! For even on laymen do they impose the functions of Presbyterhood!"1369

Thus does Tertullian describe not the True Church of Christ - but Neo-Pagan heretics. Any resemblance between his above description of "heretics" and 'charismatic' Pentecostalism or modern Paedocommunionism - is hardly coincidental!

478. Tertullian taught there should be no Communion without prior Catechism

Yet it is precisely such indiscriminate admission of Catechumens to the Lord's Table before their adequate catechization - that ultimately undermines even those unorthodox heretics! In the True Church, however - concluded Tertullian - there is a distinction between "Catechumens" on the one hand, and "Confessors and Martyrs" or the 'Faithful' alias 'Witnesses' on the other. Indeed, "what has not been freely allowed [by the heretics] - is forbidden [in the True Church]." For it is only after Catechism and Confirmation, that "the Sacrament of the Eucharist...[is to] be taken by all alike."

Apparently, this means taken alike by all catechized "men and women" - together - "at the paschal solemnities" alias "the banquet of God." It also means both "rich and poor" - together. Yet it just as apparently also excludes all uncatechized (and uncatechizable) infants and children.<sup>1370</sup>

Yet more significantly. Even after Tertullian himself had (though apparently only temporarily) lapsed into Semi-Montanism, he still distinguished between adults and children. For he still went on referring to "him who is not [yet] a man, [but only] a stripling male." There and then, he rightly asked his opponents: "Why do 'we' partly acknowledge the definition of the Apostle as absolute, with regard to 'every man' [in First Corinthians 11:3 (and in 11:28!) cf. Genesis 2:23] - without entering upon disquisitions as to why he has not withal named the boy?"<sup>1371</sup>

479. Tertullian opposed the Paedocommunionism of the anticatechetical apostate Marcion

Elsewhere, Tertullian opposed the semi-docetic christology and rejection of the unity of the Older and Newer Testaments of the anticatechetical apostate Marcion. Per contra, even Jesus' admission to manducation at the Passover only after becoming a catechized adolescent!

Wrote Tertullian:<sup>1372</sup> "Even in Christ, knowledge had its stages of growth [Luke 2:40-52]. Through those stages, the Apostle too passed.

"'When I was a child,' he says, 'as a child I spake, as a child I understood. But when I became a man, those (things) which had been the child's, I abandoned.'" First Corinthians 13:11 cf. 3:2 & 11:23-34 & 14:20 & 16:13.

Tertullian continued: "'If any who is named a brother among you is a fornicator or an idolater..., with such do not even eat' - not to say the Eucharist! Because... 'a little leaven spoils the flavour of the whole lump.'" First Corinthians 5:6-11.

Perhaps referring also to confirmation unto one's first manducation at the Supper, right after his above mention of eating especially of the "Eucharist" - Tertullian then immediately goes on to cite Paul's instruction (at First Timothy 5:22). States Tertullian: "'Do not hastily lay hands on anyone, nor communicate with the sins of others!'" Indeed, this seems highly significant.

Now against the semi-docetic heretic Marcion, Tertullian distinguished<sup>1373</sup> between the ages

of people "so different as the small children (parvulos) and [older] children (pueros)." The first group of "parvulos" (alias or paidia) are like the one written about in Luke 9:47f. The second group of "pueros" are like the young lads or the youths mentioned in Second Kings 2:23f. This distinction is very important, and is vital in determining the minimum age of admission to the Eucharist.

For modern Neo-Paedocommunionists would admit their own parvulos or paidia alias their "little children" to manducation at that Sacrament. On the other hand, the antipaedocommunionistic Early-Patristic and the Reformational Church - would admit only those of their children who have successfully been catechized and also become youth by reaching the age of adolescence.

Now those modern Paedocommunionists who are not Eastern-Orthodox - give the bread and the wine at the Lord's Table to their own small children (as distinct from their infants). Yet, in so doing, they are in that respect little better than the heretic Marcion.

Against that latter heretic, Tertullian reminded also other all paedocommunionistic heretics:1374 "The Creator...let loose bears against children (pueros), in order to avenge His Prophet Elisha who had been mocked by them (Second Kings 2:23f). This...distinguishes things so different as small children (parvulos) - and children (pueros)" of an older age "capable of discretion; [viz.] able to mock, if not to blaspheme....

"God is a just God. He did not spare impious children [from punishment] - exacting as He does honour for every time of life; and especially, of course, from youth."

#### 480. Tertullian's own highly-catechetical Antipaedocommunionism

Unlike the apostate Marcion, Tertullian antipaedocommunionistically considered it imperative that Catechumens be catechized. This was and is essential - so that such Catechumens become able also to reject transubstantiation and memorialism, in favour of becoming able to discern the real Spirit-ual presence of the Saviour at His Table in His body (represented by the bread) and in His blood (represented by the wine).

Observed Tertullian:1375 "The Law prefigures His passion.... Moses had declared there was a sacred Mystery (Sacramentum).

"'It is the Lord's Passover' [Leviticus 23:5 cf. Luke 22:1-20f]. How earnestly therefore does He manifest the bent of His soul: 'With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you [catechized adult Disciples], before I suffer [Luke 22:15]!...

"When He so earnestly expressed His desire to eat the Passover, He considered it His Own Feast.... Having taken the bread and given it to His Disciples, He made it His Own body by saying 'This is My body' [Luke 22:19]; that is, the figure of My body. A figure, however, there could not have been - unless there were first a veritable body....



"In order, however, that you may discover how anciently wine is used as a figure for blood, turn to Isaiah [chapter 63] who asks 'Who is this that comes...from the trampling down of the full winepress?' The prophetic Spirit...[thus] represents the bleeding condition of His flesh under the metaphor of garments dyed in red - as if reddened in the trampling down and crushing process of the winepress from which the labourers descend reddened with the wine-juice, like men stained in blood.

"Much more clearly still does the book of Genesis [49:11] foretell this, when (in the blessing of Judah out of whose tribe Christ according to the flesh was to come) it even then delineated Christ in the person of that Patriarch" Judah - the ancestor of Christ according to the flesh. Viz., where it "says: 'He washes His garments in wine and His clothes in the blood of grapes.'

"In His garments and clothes, the prophecy pointed out His flesh and His blood in the wine. Thus did He now [as an adult right before Calvary] consecrate His blood in wine." This was "He Who then (by the Patriarch) used the figure of wine to describe His blood."

Tertullian further excluded from the Lord's Table all backslidden and fornicating Communicant Members even of the Christian Church. Rightly did he banish even all mature yet fornicating Communicant Christians from the Lord's Table.<sup>1376</sup>

Rightly did he bar even Catechumens from sacramental manducation at the Eucharist - because they had not been catechized enough to become able to discern the Lord's body and His blood. Not so, however, the apostate Marcion - in the latter's sacramental laxness toward Catechumens!

Insisted Tertullian regarding the lack of discipline at the Lord's Table in the Church at Corinth:<sup>1377</sup> "The wicked person must be put away from the midst of them [First Corinthians 5:13].... Purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump - just as you are unleavened! For even Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us [First Corinthians 5:7].

"But why is Christ our Passover - if [as Marcion apparently maintained] the Passover be not a type of Christ - in the similitude of the blood which saves, and of the lamb which is Christ?" See Exodus chapter twelve!

"He [the inspired Apostle Paul] warns us against fornication [First Corinthians 5:1-10]" - a sin uncommittable by pre-adolescents. However: "Marcion wholly prohibits all carnal intercourse to the faithful" who receive the 'Eucharist' in heretical Marcionitic circles. Remarkd Tertullian in return (and not without sarcasm): "We will say nothing about his 'Catechumens.'" Touché!

#### 481. Summary of Tertullian's catechetical opposition to Paedocommunionism

Let us now summarize the above material of the antipaedocommunionistic Tertullian. As the 'Father' of Western Christianity, he gave many details about the Catechumenate. He frequently used the word "catechize" - and he withheld the Lord's Supper even from Catechumens.

To Tertullian, also true covenant children needed to be catechized before they could later be confirmed as Communicants. They first had to be taught how to "discern" the real Spirit-ual presence of the Lord's body and blood. For Jesus "earnestly desired to eat the Passover with His Disciples" alias His taught ones.

Yet among unorthodox heretics, "no distinction" is made between the Catechumen and the adequately catechized and then confirmed 'faithful' or 'full-of-faith' Communicant. Among such heretics, "the Catechumen is pronounced fit [to commune even]...before he is instructed."

To such heretics, it is "doubtful who is a Catechumen - and who is a 'Communicant.' They all alike have access" to the Sacrament. And thus, such heretics cast that which is holy (viz. the eucharistic elements of bread and wine) also to the dogs. Matthew 7:6.

In the True Church, however, there is a distinction between "Catechumens" on the one hand and "Confessors and Martyrs" alias 'Witnesses' on the other. For there in the True Church - "what has not been freely allowed, is forbidden." Cf. the Regulative Principle of Worship! Only after catechization and subsequent Confirmation, is "the Sacrament of the Eucharist...[to] be taken by all alike."

Meanwhile, one should distinguish between adults and children - noting "him who is not [yet] a [man], [but only] a stripling male." In so doing, one would certainly not confuse "'every man' in First Corinthians 11:3f (& 11:28 cf. Exodus 12:3) with one who is still only a "boy" (cf. Exodus 12:26 & 12:37).

Tertullian rejected the apostate paedocommunionistic heresy - on the basis of Luke 2:40-52 and I Corinthians 3:2 & 5:6-11 & 11:23-34 & 13:11 & 14:20 & 16:13 cf. First Timothy 5:22. Thus he distinguished between small children (parvulos) - and older children (pueros) like those lads alias adolescent youth mentioned in Second Kings 2 :23f who were "capable of discretion."

For in Luke 20:1-20, Christ gave His Supper precisely to His catechized Disciples. Because they had been 'discipled' or taught - they, as purified mature adults, were thereby able to reject both transubstantiation and mere-memorialism in favour of Christ's Spiritually-real presence in the bread and the wine at His Table. For they had learned how to "discern" the wine from Christ's blood it represented - which blood, at the institution of that Sacrament, was still intact inside Christ's body and hand then holding the wine in the cup and giving it to His disciples. Thus Tertullian.

482. The famous 'Catechetical Schools' in the Christian Church at Alexandria

Especially Alexandria in Egypt had been a flourishing centre also of Ancient-Hebrew Catechetical Schools. This was so - ever since at least 270 B.C., when the Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures was being compiled there.<sup>1378</sup>

The later Christian Church's Catechetical Schools in Alexandria, built further on that solid Hebrew foundation. Manufacturers of idols, secular zither-players and lascivious dancers were all required to cease from those activities - before being enrolled in Catechism Classes under Chief

Catechizers (like Athenagoras, Pantaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen).<sup>1379</sup>

The Catechumens were separated from the baptized Communicant Members who had been catechized adequately and then admitted to the Lord's Supper. The Catechumens had to attend two or three different classes - and over three years.

At the end thereof, they publically had to give assent: to the Apostles' Creed, to the Lord's Prayer, and to the Ten Commandments. Compare this with the mention of a similar curriculum: in the Late-Mediaeval Proto-Protestant Waldensian Confessions; in the Bohemian Confessions; in the Heidelberg Catechism; and in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, QQ. 4-84 & 98-107.

As Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Bavinck points out, these Catechetical Schools were organized "in various places - such as Alexandria, Antioch, Caesarea, Edessa, Nisibis, Constantinople, Rome, and Carthage.... This education served not only to prepare [pagan] Catechumens for Baptism.... It served to train also [covenant] children and youth from Christian homes - so that they too could acquire further education" toward their admission to the Lord's Supper.<sup>1380</sup> Thus Bavinck.

Rev. Professor Dr. Bijlsma rightly remarks as follows, concerning this Early Church practice: "Children were born in families.... Those born within the circle of Christendom, received [Infant] Baptism.

"They entered the Church at birth.... A form of Catechism after Baptism arose for those children, as they grew up."<sup>1381</sup>

There was and is a basic continuity between the Covenant of Life before and the Covenant of Redemption after the fall of man. So too, between the Older and the Newer Testament.

Here, among the Early Christians, the Biblical practice of the Ancient Hebrews was followed. Previously, among the latter, Infant Circumcision had been followed by the learning of the Catechism (alias the Seefer Chaanoch Le-na<sup>^</sup>ar or "Book for Catechizing the Youth") during late childhood (as in Proverbs 22:6) - before final admission to the Passover after Confirmation at teenage as a Son of the Law (alias Bar Mitzvah).

Now, in the Early Church, Infant Baptism was followed by learning the Catechism during childhood. That was and is necessary, before admission to the Lord's Supper after Confirmation at teenage as a Communicant Member of Christ's Church.

As Baptism had replaced Circumcision - and as Christian Catechism had similarly replaced the Catechism of the Ancient Hebrews - so too had the Lord's Supper replaced the Passover, at Calvary. Cf.: Proverbs 22:6; Luke 2:21,40-47; First Corinthians 5:6-8; Colossians 2:11-12; and Hebrews 5:6 to 6:6.

483. Clement of Alexandria advocated no Eucharistic Communion before sexual maturity

The A.D. 400 Jerome wrote that the A.D. 220 Clement of Alexandria "led the Theological

School at Alexandria after the death of his "Master." The latter was the preceding "Chief Catechizer" there. His successor Clement then led that School - precisely "as a Teacher of the Catechetes"1382 alias the Catechizers (who in turn then went and taught the Catechumens).

Now Clement himself stated that all religions, whether true or false, "catechize" their adherents. "Also with the barbarian philosophers," he explained -- "to teach and enlighten, is called: 'to regenerate.'"

Thus, "the most elementary instruction of children embraces the interpretation of the 'four elements' [water, fire, earth, and air]. For it is said that the Phrygians call water 'Bedu.'" Also, when the pagan "Macedonian priests invoke Bedu..., 'Drops' is the operating Word. This, beginning with elementary training, and advancing to the growth of the man - inflames and illumines man, up to the measure of maturity."1383

Also among Christians, therefore, we find catechization. "Paedagogy," explained Clement in his Pedagogue alias his Instructor,1384 "is the training [or catechization] of children.... Discipline (paidagoogia) we declare to be right guidance from child-hood to vir-tue" - viz. from im-maturity to vir-ility - "till we all attain...to a perfect [or mature] man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so that we no longer be children."

Among Christians, the "instruction which reveals hidden things [or 'the Mysteries' alias 'the Sacramenta'], is called 'illumination.'" For "the holy Apostle Paul says...: 'Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them who are "perfect"' [First Corinthians 2:6f]....

"I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual but as to carnal [ones] - even to babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, not with meat' [First Corinthians 3:1-3].... If then 'the milk' is said by the Apostle to belong to the babes, and 'meat' [or flesh] to be the food of the full-grown - 'milk' will be understood to be catechetical instruction"1385 prior to the Candidate's anticipation of his later graduation to meat (alias the eucharistic 'flesh').

"The same takes place also in our case - whose Exemplar Christ became [cf. Luke 2:40-47].... We have been illuminated. Illuminated, we became 'Sons'" - i.e., 'Sons of the Law' as Communicant Members, at our teen-age 'Confirmation' alias our Christian Bar Mitzvaah. "Being made 'Sons' - we are [then] made 'perfect'" alias mature.1386

484. Clement taught Eucharistic Communion is only for those both weened and catechized

In Clement's doctrine regarding the commencement of the catechizing of covenant children, a start is made when they are still young. This should be as soon as knowledge begins to get imparted systematically to the growing child.

Declares Clement:1387 "We have still to explain what is said by the Apostle: 'I have fed you with milk (as children in Christ), not with meat; for you were not able, neither yet are you now able' (First Corinthians 3:2).... Does this, as explaining a parable, not mean something like the following? And is the expression not to be read somewhat to the following effect: 'I have fed you

with milk in Christ' - and, after a slight stop, let us add 'as children'?"

Clement explains further: "The expression [in First Corinthians 3:2] 'I have given you...to drink' (epotisa), is the symbol of perfect appropriation. For [it is only] those who are full-grown [that] are said 'to drink' [viz. wine]; babes [however, are merely said] 'to suck' [viz. milk]."

Now 'My blood,' says the Lord, 'is true drink' (John 6:55). In saying [to adults], therefore, 'I have given you...' "to drink" - has he [Paul] not indicated the knowledge of the truth?... For children at the breast, milk alone suffices." Yet, in the words of Christ Himself, you see another kind of food...[which] He catachrestically calls 'the cup.'" Matthew 20:22 cf. 26:20-27. Here, "catachrestically" also implies catechetically.

Then Clement continued: "The Word declares Himself to be the Bread of Heaven.... Blood is figuratively termed wine.... For is it not figuratively represented as wine? 'He washes,' it is said [Genesis 49:11], 'His garment in wine, His robe in the blood of the grape.'"

Clearly, no transubstantiation. Indeed, catechizing before eucharizing is necessary - also to make that clear!

Continues Clement: "The Word, then, Who leads the children to salvation, is appropriately called 'the Instructor' (Paedagogue).... There is the instruction of him who is led, and learns; and that by him who leads, and teaches... There is, thirdly, the guidance itself; and fourthly - [there is] what is taught, as the Commandments enjoined."1388

As Beckwith remarks, Clement "understands the symbolism of John [6:55] as suitable only to adults." So, then, "he probably understood the symbolism of the Lord's Supper in the same way."1389

485. Clement catechized covenant children ere their first Eucharist at adolescence

Observes Clement: "'Honour your father and mother, so that it may go well with you' [Exodus 20:12]!" Mature 'Covenant Adults' - continued Clement1390 - "'are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them' (Isaiah 65:23b).

"Therefore, he who procreates and educates children according to the Word - does so for Him [the Word]. And he trains them in the Lord..., through true Catechism (per veram Catechesim)....

"Whence Paul too, writing to the Galatians, says: 'My little children..., I [keep on] travail[ing] - until Christ has been formed in you!'" Galatians 4:19. "Again, he writes to the Corinthians: 'For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ - yet you have not many fathers.'" First Corinthians 4:15.

For "'when you come together, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper' (First Corinthians 11:20)" - continues Clement1391 (here citing Paul's reprimand of the unruly Corinthians). "The Apostle, checking those that transgress..., says: 'For every one taketh beforehand, in eating his own supper....

One is hungry, but another drunken!

"Don't you have homes to eat and to drink in? Or are you despising the Church of God - and shaming those who have not?" (First Corinthians 11:21-22)."

Indeed, Clement even cites pagan Persian instruction concerning adolescence alias "reaching sexual maturity."<sup>1392</sup> For, as already seen,<sup>1393</sup> the enthusiastic promoters of each religion - whether true or false - educate and 'illuminate' especially their own offspring (and particularly at adolescence) toward mature membership in their own cult.

This is seen especially with regard to the 'heresies' or 'divisions' within the Christian Church even at Communion Services. "For there must be also heresies [or 'sects' or 'divisions'] among you - so that those who have been approved (hoi dokimoi) may be made manifest among you. When you therefore come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper!" First Corinthians 11:19-20.

Here, Clement comments:<sup>1394</sup> "Those...are to be believed, who hold firmly to the truth.... It is said that it is on account of 'those that are approved, that heresies exist' (First Corinthians 11:19). [The Apostle] calls 'approved'...those who in reaching faith apply to the teaching of the Lord with some discrimination [or 'discernment' as in First Corinthians 11:29]..., or those who have already become approved both in life and knowledge."

Either way, no uncatechizable toddler or infant can possibly meet such requirements and thus then get "approved" for admission to manducate at the Eucharist! For such lack both the "discrimination" and the "knowledge" necessary before they could get "approved...to eat the Lord's Supper!"

Naturally, explained Clement, "he who has fallen into heresy passes through an arid wilderness - abandoning the only true God.... Heresies which employ bread and water in the oblation, [are] not according to the canon of the Church. For there are those who celebrate the Eucharist with mere water."<sup>1395</sup>

Why? Probably, in order to encourage younger people to manducate there. Viz., to make it easier for them improperly to come and to 'commune' at the Holy Table's alcoholic wine (by first replacing it by water and thereby greatly diluting it with water). This would, accordingly, represent the first infiltration of pagan and/or (re-)paganizing Paedocommunionism among heretical schismatics breaking away from the Christian Church (early in the third century A.D.). Yet the abstemious Clement, while insisting on real alcoholic wine at the Lord's Table, precisely there clearly seemed to oppose the 'pagan' and paganizing practice of Paedocommunion.

Declared that august Alexandrian:<sup>1396</sup> "To drink the 'blood' of Jesus, is to become partaker of the Lord's immortality.... The 'mixture' of wine and water" - cf. the progressive use of the two Sacraments - "nourishes to faith." As to the 'Eucharist' - "renowned and glorious" - "they who by faith partake of it, are sanctified."

This suggests the impossibility of speechless infants professing any "faith" they might have -

in order to qualify for manducation of the sacramental elements at the Supper. It suggests too the impossibility of conveying any ex opere operato sanctificatory benefit thereof to any who might manducate thereof otherwise than "by faith."

Does this preclude manducation of the Sacrament by older young children? Well, it least everywhere else than at the Lord's Table, Clement then immediately went on to enjoin - "flee as far as possible from wine!" Especially "boys and girls should keep as much as possible away from this 'medicine' [the sacramental wine]. For it is not right to pour into the burning season of life, the hottest of all liquids - wine - adding, as it were, fire to fire."

Certainly even the above in itself would, in Clement's eyes, tend to discourage manducation at the Supper even by older young children. Indeed, the "suitable instruction" [over a period of three years] he says Candidates for the Supper first need to receive, and concerning which they then need to be "proved" as to their "understanding" in terms of First Corinthians 11:27-28 - as set out by Clement in our next section below - clearly precludes paedocommunion.

#### 486. Clement's three years of catechizing before one's first Eucharistic Communion

Clearly, to Clement, 1397 there must be no manducation at the Sacrament of Holy Communion - without first catechizing before Confirmation. "They must test themselves.... In the dispensing [or distributing] of the Eucharist..., one's own conscience is best - for choosing accurately, or [for] shunning. And its firm foundation is a right life, with suitable instruction.

"But the imitation of those who have already been proved [alias 'tested' or examined], and who have led correct lives, is most excellent for the understanding and practice of the Commandments. 'So that whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup!' [ First Corinthians 11:27-28]....

"'For there are certainly among us many weak and sickly, and many sleep [in death]. But if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged' [First Corinthians 11:31-32]....

"No one lights up a candle and puts it under a bucket, but upon a candlestick - so that it may give light to those who are regarded worthy of the feast [Matthew 5:15 cf. First Corinthians 11:29].... The Lord did not hinder from doing good, while keeping the Sabbath; but allowed us to communicate of those divine mysteries and of that holy light - to those who are able to receive them....

"Therefore the Saviour, taking the bread, first spoke and blessed. Then, breaking the bread, He presented it - so that we might eat it according to reason; and so that, knowing the Scriptures, we might walk obediently....

"'When we were children,' says the...Apostle [Galatians 4:1-3], 'we were kept in bondage.... And the child, though heir, differs nothing from a servant till the time appointed by the father' [cf. Exodus 12:26f,37,45-49].... 'But strong meat belongs to those that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their sense exercised to discern both good and evil.... For everyone that uses

milk, is unskillful in the Word of righteousness; for he is a baby' [Hebrews 5:13f cf. First Corinthians 11:29] and not yet acquainted with the Word...and not able to give a reason in himself...

"'He who is not corrected by discipline, errs.... For the right heart seeks knowledge' [Proverbs 15:14].... It is difficult to exhibit the really pure and transparent words respecting the true light, to swinish and untrained ears.... Deliver them to whom it is requisite; but not enjoining us to communicate to all without distinction!"

This, then, is why Paul tells the catechized Timothy who had publically professed his own faith in Christ: "O Timothy, preserve that which has been committed to your trust!... Some, professing, have gone astray concerning the faith." First Timothy 6:11-21. And such that err after so professing must, of course, thenceforth be barred from the Lord's Table - until such time as they might first [re]repent.

Clearly, Clement was here at pains to remind his readers that both the inspired Apostle Paul and indeed also the infallible Saviour Himself did not believe in an 'Open Table' for 'whosoever will' at Communion Celebrations. To the contrary. "The Apostle," insisted Clement, was rather in the habit of restraining alias "checking those that transgress" at the Table.

Moreover, "the Saviour" Himself, Clement added, limited manducation at Holy Communion "according to reason." For He limited and still limits it to those who, "knowing the Scriptures..., might walk obediently."

Indeed, there must first be a "professing" - alias a public profession of faith before manducating at the Lord's Table [cf. First Timothy 6:12-21]. So, 'child communion' (sic) was here quite taboo.

Clement also seems to speak of the Catechism Classes for 'Admission to Communion' as lasting for at least three years, and indeed as not terminating before the attainment of the age of maturity. "The Law" (in Leviticus 19:23f), he insists, thus "orders newly planted trees [cf. Catechumens] to be nourished three years in succession, and the superfluous growths to be cut off..., tilling and digging round them.... It does not allow [!] imperfect fruit to be plucked from immature trees - but after three years, in the fourth year, dedicates the first-fruits to God after the tree has attained maturity.

"This type of husbandry, may serve as a mode[l] of instruction .... We must cut the growths of sins and the useless weeds of the mind that spring up round the vital fruit, till the shoot of faith is perfected and becomes strong. For in the fourth year, since there is need of time to him that is being solidly catechized, the four virtues are consecrated to God." 1398 Luke 2:41f & 13:6-9.

Compare the Hebrew practice of starting Passover Communicant Classes at age ten, for Confirmation at age thirteen. Luke 2:40-47 cf. Aboth 5:21. Once again, this is irreconcilable with the admission of small children to manducation at the Lord's Table - but altogether reconcilable with Calvin's own suggestions (as found in his Institutes at its IV:16:30 & IV:19:13).



Concludes Clement:1399 "Those who fall into sin after Baptism, are those who are subjected to discipline" alias to being disciplined. This is why Abraham, the father of all believers, was catechized. Genesis 12:1f cf. Romans 4:1-13 & Galatians 3:29.

Indeed, this is also why he later further catechized or "trained" his own men-servants - before Melchizedek the Prophet-Priest-King brought forth the 'sacramental' bread and wine. Genesis 14:14-18. Hence, Clement too observed: "As Moses says - Melchizedek, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God..., gave bread and wine, furnishing consecrated food - for a type of the Eucharist." Cf. too Hebrews 5:6 to 6:5f with 7:1-4f.

#### 487. Summary of Clement and his insistence on first catechizing would-be Communicants

The famous Clement of Alexandria, then, was himself "a Teacher of the Catechetes" alias the Catechumens. He stated that all religions, whether true or false, "catechize" their adherents - and that "beginning with elementary training and advancing to the growth of the man, inflames and illumines man up to the measure of maturity."

Further: "Discipline (paidagoogia)" is "right guidance from child-hood to vir-tue" - viz. from im-maturity to vir-ility - "till we all attain...maturity" and "be no longer children." Maturity is the stage - after "catechetical instruction"- of being fed "meat, to be the food of the full-grown."

"The expression [in First Corinthians 3:2] 'I have given you...to drink'" is significant. For it is only "those who are full-grown [who] are said 'to drink' [wine]; babes [however, merely] 'suck.' [viz. milk].... Blood is figuratively termed wine."

Mature 'Covenant Adults' - then - "are the seed of the blessed of the Lord and their offspring with them'.... Therefore he who procreates and educates children according to the Word - does so for Him. And he trains them in the Lord...through true Catechism."

The Christian Church Father Clement of Alexandria cites even pagan Persian instruction concerning adolescence alias "reaching sexual maturity." At the Lord's Table, "the 'mixture' of wine and water...nourishes to faith." But everywhere else than there, enjoined Clement - "flee as far as possible from wine!"

Especially "boys and girls should keep as much as possible away from this 'medicine'.... They must test themselves...with suitable instruction."

For "whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup!..."

"The Lord did not hinder from doing good, while keeping the Sabbath; but allowed us to communicate of those divine mysteries and of that holy light - to those who are able to receive them...so that we might eat it according to reason...so that, knowing the Scriptures, we might walk obediently.... [For] some, professing, have gone astray concerning the faith."

Uncatechizable toddlers or infants cannot possibly meet the requirements and get "approved" for admission to manducate at the Eucharist. For such lack both the "discrimination" and the "knowledge" necessary before they could get "approved...to eat the Lord's Supper."

Concludes Clement: "Those who fall into sin after Baptism, are those who are subjected to discipline." Abraham, the father of all believers, was catechized - and he later further catechized or "trained" his own men-servants before "Melchizedek...gave bread and wine [as]... a type of the Eucharist." Clearly, in Clement - all Paedocommunion is utterly precluded.

488. Hippolytus catechizes only 'men and women' for admission to Communion

Also Hippolytus of Rome's A.D. 215 Treatise on Apostolic Tradition shows that the Catechumenate generally lasted three years. It does so, with two extremely searching examinations - one at the commencement and the other at the termination thereof. Beyond doubt, this clearly excluded all Infant-Communionism and all Toddler-Communionism.

For there, Hippolytus clearly states:1400 "Let a Catechumen be instructed for three years.... Each time the Teacher finishes his instruction - let the Catechumens pray by themselves apart from the 'Faithful' [alias the Communicants]!... After the prayer of the Catechumens, let the Teacher...pray - and dismiss them [viz. before the Communicants then eucharized]!"

Hippolytus's latter words distinguish the Catechumens from the Communicants. For not the former but only the latter then went ahead and eucharized, whenever the Lord's Supper was held.

Around 232 A.D., Hippolytus wrote about "the Catechumen who suffered martyrdom" - as well as "the Faithful" alias the Communicants who "ought to eat...the Holy Communion" unlike the "Catechumens." Hippolytus then went on to state "that Deacons may pronounce the 'Benediction' and [the] 'Thanksgiving' at the 'Love-Feasts'" which took place only after the Overseer alias the "Bishop celebrates the Holy Communion (Sunaxis)" when "the Presbyters...stand by him."1401

It is interesting to note that even around A.D. 400, the great Chrysostom later called this very "Sunaxis - 'shudderful'." Why? Answered Chrysostom: "Because the unworthy recipient - in the Sunaxis - eats and drinks his own condemnation."1402 Compare First Corinthians 11:28-29!

Hippolytus is also reputed to have written1403 about "Catechumens and...the Missa" - alias that point in the Worship Service at which the Catechumens were sent out of the Service right prior to the beginning of manducation at the Eucharist. In contradistinction to this, "none of the Believers [alias the eucharizing Fideles] should taste anything - except after they have taken [or been given] the Sacred Mysteries."

Such takers or partakers of the Sacred Mysteries of the Eucharist excluded "Catechumens and the like" - but apparently included catechized "virgins and widows." For the "Deacon" was to "do his part in prayer and the breaking of bread for a blessing...and the discharge of widows."

Clearly excluding 'Infant Communion' and also 'Young-Child Communion' - Hippolytus apparently then went on to state:1404 "It was heretofore tolerated in some places that Communicants should take each one his portion, with his own hand. But now we permit nobody to receive this Sacrament, except at the hand of the Minister.... It may be received...alike by all 'the Faithful' [or the Fideles alias the catechized Communicants], whether men or women" - but not babies, toddlers or children!

Indeed, elsewhere in Hippolytus - regarding "the oblation" of the "body and blood" - also mature "maidens who desire...[the] bridechamber" seem to have been invited to "come" to the Lord's Table together with those "saints who disciplined" themselves.1405 Incidentally, also Tertullian had confirmed that faithful women too - if not especially faithful women in particular - were to receive the Eucharist.1406

Implicitly, the Eucharist could not be received by unprofessing infants or even by believing toddlers. Nor could older children not yet catechized, become Audientes (or 'Hearers').

Nor could even the Competentes - those already 'competent' - be admitted to the Lord's Table (unless and until further admitted or 'confirmed' as Fideles alias 'Professing Believers'). For Hippolytus also wrote that because "Christ kept the Supper" only with His catechized and indeed adult Disciples - "it is needful that I too should keep it in the same manner as did the Lord."1407 Cf. too Luke 22:1-20 and First Corinthians 11:23f.

489. Origen taught only the catechized are 'competent' to commune eucharistically

The celebrated theologian Origen of Alexandria (230 A.D.) was a child of the covenant by birth. Yet, when a youth, he himself (like all other covenant children) still needed to receive ecclesiastical instruction in the Christian Faith.

He did so in the Catechetical School of the great Clement of Alexandria. This of course evidences the antipaedocommunionism of that Clement.

Origen, like his mentor Clement, upheld the Infant Baptism of his fellow covenant children.1408 Yet he was taught nevertheless, while himself being catechized, that also children of the covenant need catechizing during their youth.

While still a young man, Origen himself "undertook the work of instructing the Catechetes in the scattered churches of Alexandria" (thus Jerome).1409 Indeed, according to Eusebius, Origen "was in his eighteenth year when he took charge of the Catechetical School."1410

There, he was obliged to give catechetical instruction not to small children. But instead, to "women as well as men" - and both "by day and night" (thus Eusebius).1411

Origen - quite wrongly (as he too later admitted) - then had himself castrated. He did this, in order to protect himself against the sexual temptations which could arise also during his nocturnal catechizations not of immature children but precisely of mature female Catechumens.1412

Further, Origen wrote much on the Catechumenate - almost none of which, regrettably, is still extant. Yet we do know that he clearly distinguished among: those admitted to the Catechism Class (alias the 'Audientes'); those ready to graduate from it (alias the 'Competentes'); and those who had actually become Communicant Members (alias the 'Fideles').1413

490. Origen's Against Celsus is clearly antipaedocommunionistic

Among Origen's works, are his ten books Against Celsus. Celsus was a polytheistic Platonist, who around A.D. 180 had written a work attacking Christianity - titled The True Doctrine.

Just before the pagan Emperor Decius's savage persecution of Christians in A.D. 249f, Origen responded to that attack. Origen did so in his own work Against Celsus.

From the latter, it is clear that already in A.D. 180 even Celsus himself had been aware that "in the Epistles of Paul" the Apostle - "some, professing, had erred concerning the faith" in Christ. Cf. First Timothy 6:20f.

Indeed, that awareness - responded Origen - was connected precisely with the most famous of all passages in regard to manducating at the Eucharist. "Respecting these" - answered Origen, citing First Corinthians 11:19f - "there must be heresies among you, so that those who are approved may become manifest among you."1414

A little later, Origen responded to another remark by Celsus. From that response, it is clear that Celsus knew that Christians require(d) catechetical instruction before admitting people to manducate at the Table of the Lord. For Celsus the Pagan had remarked about Christians that "we see that our audience is composed of simpler minds which need such instruction as is figuratively termed 'milk.'"1415

Origen's response to that remark was and is itself most instructive. "The word is used by our Paul," explained Origen, "in writing to the Corinthians who were Greeks...not yet purified in their morals - 'I have fed you with milk, not with meat. For till now, you were not able to bear it. Neither are you yet now able' [First Corinthians 3:2f]....

"Now the same writer, knowing that there was a certain kind of nourishment better adapted for the soul, and that the food of those young persons who were admitted was compared to milk, continues: 'And you have become such as need milk, but not strong meat. For every one who uses milk, is unskilful in the word of righteousness. For he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to those who are of full age - even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern' [Hebrews 5:12-14]....

"Would then those who believe these words to be well spoken - suppose that the noble doctrines of our faith would never be mentioned in an assembly of wise men; but that wherever (our instructors) see young men and a mob of slaves and a collection of foolish individuals, they publicly bring forward divine and venerable truths and before such persons make a display of themselves in treating of them? But it is clear to him who examines the whole spirit of our writings [cf. also First

Corinthians 11: 28f], that Celsus is animated with a hatred against the human race resembling that of the ignorant populace - and gives utterance to these falsehoods without examination."

Furthermore, adds Origen, 1416 "we maintain indeed that 'human' wisdom is an exercise for the soul. But 'divine' wisdom is the 'end' - also being termed the 'strong' meat of the soul by him who has said that 'strong meat belongs to those that are perfect [alias mature or teleioi], even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern'" [Epistle to the Hebrews 5:14 cf. First Corinthians 11:29].

Finally, 1417 "it is objected to us...that we ourselves are accustomed to observe certain days - as for example the Lord's day, the Preparation, the Passover, or Pentecost.... He who considers that 'Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us' [First Corinthians 5:7f], and that it is his duty to keep the Feast by eating of the flesh of the Word - never ceases to keep the Paschal Feast. For the Pascha means a 'Passover' - and he is ever striving in all his thoughts, words and deeds to pass over from the things of this life to God....

"It would take too long for us at present to show why we are required by the Law of God to keep its Festivals by eating 'the bread of affliction' [Deuteronomy 16:3] or 'unleavened bread with bitter herbs' [Exodus 12:8].... We are forbidden to take part in...[also paedocommunionistic pagan] festivals, when we know the difference between the Table of the Lord and the table of demons [First Corinthians 10:21]. And knowing this - we endeavour as much as we can to be partakers of the Lord's Table, and beware to the utmost of joining at any time the table of demons."

Interestingly, in his work *Against the Christians*, also the Neo-Platonistic Pagan Porphyry - a contemporary of the A.D. 230f Origen - witnesses to the Christian Catechumenate. Regarding Christ's saying (in John 21:15-17): "Feed My lambs; feed My sheep" - Porphyry writes: 1418

"I suppose that 'the sheep' are the faithful who have already advanced to the 'Mystery of Perfection' [alias the 'meat' and wine of the Lord's Supper], while 'the lambs' mean the group of those who are still Catechumens and who are nourished on the gentle milk of the doctrine" before they are given solid meat (Hebrews 5:10 to 6:9). Thus, even the Pagan Porphyry had a better insight into ecclesiastical practices early in the third century - than do modern Paedocommunionists!

#### 491. Origen's Homilies and Commentaries are clearly antipaedocommunionistic

Origen's Homilies on the Book of Judges seem very relevant. There, he writes: 1419 "Before we arrive at the provision of the heavenly bread and are filled with the flesh of the spotless Lamb; before we are inebriated with the blood of the true Vine Which sprang from the root of David - while we are children and are fed with milk and retain the discourse about the 'first principles' of Christ - as children we act under the oversight of Stewards."

Paedocommunionism here seems quite precluded. For Origen here clearly seems to be saying that before we are admitted to manducate at the Lord's Table, we are first to be subject to the scrutiny of Ministers of the Word and Sacraments. First Corinthians 4:1 cf. 11:20-34.

Here, as R.T. Beckwith observes<sup>1420</sup> anent the above passage in Origen, "it is difficult to understand him as speaking of anything but [non-eucharized] literal children, and the literal Sacrament [of Holy Communion]. Literal children, if they have learned 'the first principles' of Christ [viz. those of the First Sacrament of Infant Baptism, Hebrews 6:1-2], do not have to wait before feeding on Christ spiritually - though they may have to wait before feeding on Him sacramentally [at the Eucharist]."

"Especially in the Early Church with its long course of catechizing..., Origen [here] makes no allusion to Baptism. So it seems that he is speaking of literal children already baptized - but waiting for admission to the Lord's Supper."

Even the very outspoken Paedocommunist Peter Leithart here admits:<sup>1421</sup> "Beckwith's is a possible explanation of the passage. But it is equally possible that Origen was speaking instead about the relationship of the Old and New Covenant.... I do not have access to the full treatise. Out of context, I cannot determine whether Beckwith's interpretation is the more plausible one."

Frankly, that is an amazing statement. For there, Leithart seems to say that his own view of a passage in Origen he has never seen first-hand - is no less valid than the view of the same passage which Beckwith confidently cites in the prestigious Westminster Theological Journal!

In his Commentary on Matthew (14:15-21) - and again in his Commentary on John (6:10), Origen carefully excludes uncatechized children from partaking of those loaves.<sup>1422</sup> In his Commentary on Matthew (XI:14), Origen clearly says: "That which is sanctified through the Word of God and prayer does not, in its own nature, sanctify him who uses it. For, if this were so, it would sanctify even him who eats unworthily of the bread of the Lord...."

"No one on account of this food would [then] become weak or...[dyingly fall] 'asleep' for something of the kind Paul represented in saying 'For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep' [in death - First Corinthians 11:30].... Many things might be said about the Word Himself Who became flesh and true meat.... No worthless person is able to eat it."

Origen specifically states that little children (parvuli) are not admitted to the Lord's Table.<sup>1423</sup> Indeed, according to Origen,<sup>1424</sup> "the human Passover...is one thing, when kept by men.... And...the divine Passover is another thing, the true Passover, observed in spirit and truth by those who worship God in spirit and in truth."

Such, held Origen, involves the fulfilment of the Older Testament's Passover in respect of matters quite inappropriate for participation by small children. "'Thus shall you eat it, your loins girt and your shoes on your feet and your staves in your hands; and you shall eat it with haste. It is the Passover of the Lord'" [Exodus 12:12:11]....

"And again, a little further on [Exodus 12:43-48], 'And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron saying "No alien shall eat of it".... He writes to the Corinthians [First Epistle 5:7]: 'For our Passover also was sacrificed for us - namely Christ'...."

"Whether there be any Passover...is a point we must examine more carefully.... 'They shall eat the flesh this night, roasted with fire; and unleavened bread on bitter herbs shall they eat.... Roast with fire the head with the feet and the entrails!' [Exodus 12:8].... God's Word is not flesh only.... We are not to eat the flesh of the Lamb raw, as those do who are slaves of the letter like irrational animals.... We must strive to convert the rawness of Scripture into well-cooked food."1425

Indeed, all of this suggests antipaedocommunionistic catechizing before Communion. None of it is reconcilable with Paedocommunionism.

#### 492. Summary of Origen's very clearly catechetical Antipaedocommunionism

So, then, Origen was instructed in and later took charge of the Catechetical School of the great Clement of Alexandria. Origen himself instructed Catechumens. Like his mentor Clement, he upheld the Infant Baptism of his fellow covenant children - and taught that they need catechizing during their childhood before their later admission to manducation at the Lord's Table.

Origen was clearly not paedocommunionistic. For he distinguishes: those admitted to the Catechism Class (alias the 'Audientes'); those ready to graduate from it (alias the 'Competentes'); and those who had actually become Communicant Members (alias the 'Fideles').

In his great work Against Celsus, Origen indicates with Paul that "some, professing, had erred concerning the faith" in regard to manducating at the Eucharist. Indeed, even earlier, the learned Pagan Celsus himself knew that Christians require(d) catechetical instruction before being permitted to manducate at the Lord's Table. So too did Origen's pagan contemporary, Porphyry.

Also Origen himself confirms that the youth or "young persons who were admitted" to the Lord's Table - there received "strong meat" as "those who are of full age" and able "to discern." For "we maintain indeed that 'human' wisdom" is necessary for the right use of the "strong meat [which] belongs to those that are perfect" alias mature and "who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern."

Christians were and are to keep the Passover and its 'bread of affliction.' But before they were and are admitted to manducate at the Lord's Table, they were and are first to be subject to the scrutiny of Ministers of the Word and Sacraments.

Accordingly, Origen carefully excludes uncatechized children from partaking of those loaves. He specifically states that little children (parvuli) are not admitted to the Lord's Table as "the true Passover observed in spirit and truth by those who worship God in spirit and in truth" and in ways quite inappropriate for participation by small children "like irrational animals."

#### 493. Commodian and the Didaskalia both taught Catechism before Communion

Also the 240 A.D. Commodian of Syria directed "to Catechumens" the following wise warnings: "Since you have known God - be a recruit good and approved! Let virgin modesty

dwell with you in purity! Let the mind be watchful for good things! Beware that you not fall into former sins!"

Commodian then added: "If any sinful Catechumen is marked with punishment - let him live in the signs of Christianity, although not without loss" - viz., loss of admission to the Eucharist. "Always shun great sins!"<sup>1426</sup>

Significantly, all of these warnings to Catechumens against "great sins" - are indeed suitable to those on the threshold of teenage and beyond. They are not in any way at all, however, appropriate to (non-catechizing) smaller children.

Too, we should also note the A.D. 250 Christian-Syrian document known as the Didaskalia. This distinguishes between the catechization of Heathen on the one hand, and of covenant children on the other.

Regarding the former, it explains:<sup>1427</sup> "We do not refuse salvation even to the Heathen. If they repent and renounce and remove themselves from error...when they wish and promise to repent and say 'We believe' - we receive them into the Congregation so that they may hear the Word. But we do not communicate with them, until they receive the seal and are confirmed."

The Didaskalia further states that, after they had been catechized and admitted to the Lord's Table - Communicants were to reverence their Ministers who had, by catechizing them, led them from the 'First Sacrament' (of Holy Baptism) to the 'Second Sacrament' (of Holy Communion). Apparently regarding covenant children baptized in infancy and subsequently catechized and 'confirmed' when mature, the Didaskalia enjoins:<sup>1428</sup>

"Honour the Overseers...who reared you...; who bred you up with teaching; who established [or "confirmed"] you with admonition; and who made you to partake of the Holy Eucharist of God!" Cf. First Thessalonians 5:12f cf. Hebrews 13:7 & 13:10-17 & 13:24.

Beckwith rightly concludes about this "author of the Syrian Didaskalia."<sup>1429</sup> He observes: "The [chronological] order here is surely significant. The Bishop's flock had first been baptized; then been reared with a long course of [catechetical] teaching; and finally, in maturity, been admitted to Communion" to partake of the Eucharist. "His evidence agrees with Origen's."

Here, the Paedocommunionist Leithart can only feebly retort:<sup>1430</sup> "There is no obvious reason to understand the arrangement of clauses chronologically.... If the passage is not chronologically arranged, it provides no clear evidence against Paedocommunion." No evidence whatsoever against his own Paedocommunionism, apparently, suffices to satisfy the dogmatic Leithart!

To the above explanation of Beckwith, we ourselves would add that the evidence of the Didaskalia itself against any and all pre-catechetical manducation at the Passover or at the Eucharist generally before teenage, agrees with that of all its documentary predecessors. For it agrees also with that of: the Older Testament; the Newer Testament; all Pre-Cyprianic Monotheism; the A.D. 70 Judaistic Historian Flavius Josephus; all Hebraic practice until at least 220f; the



Antipaedopassoverism of the Karaite Jews even till today; the Didachee alias The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles; the Apostolic Fathers; Clement of Rome; Ignatius of Antioch; Pliny of Bythinia; The Shepherd of Hermas; Justin Martyr of Samaria; Theophilus of Antioch; Athenagoras of Athens; Irenaeus of Gaul; the Liturgy of St. James; Tertullian of Carthage; Clement of Alexandria; and Hippolytus of Rome.

That is why Paedocommunion was rejected also by Origen of Alexandria; Commodian of Syria; and the Syrian Didaskalia. For they too upheld the teachings of the Older and Newer Testaments - which they too had received also from the Apostles, the Apostolic Fathers, and all of the early-patristic writings from Clement of Rome right down to Hippolytus of Rome.

Such, then, was the universal or 'catholic' alias the general faith of the Early Church. Clearly, till at the very least A.D. 250f - that universal Christian Faith was totally antipaedocommunionistic: from Jerusalem to Antioch; from Samaria to Bythinia; from Athens to Gaul; from Alexandria to Carthage; and from Syria to Rome. Against this massive patristic testimony, the modern paedocommunionistic allegations (such as those that all Cyprianic and Pre-Cyprianic Christians were 'children of God' and that such hence included also 'communing infants' etc.) - are seen to be quite unsubstantial and altogether without foundation.

#### 494. Hollowness of modern claims that Christian Paedocommunionism is Pre-Cyprianic

Since about the mid-1970s, the modern sacramentalistic Canadian Anglican David Holeton has reconstructively tried to re-interpret the Pre-Cyprianic Antipaedocommunionism of the Patristic Fathers. That, Holeton has done in his own pro-paedocommunionistic booklet *Infant Communion Then and Now*.<sup>1431</sup>

As Holeton himself remarks:<sup>1432</sup> "I became most acutely aware of all this, when leaving my parish in Canada to continue with my academic work. When the lay people of the parish were meeting with the Archbishop to discuss their new priest, they were asked what they wanted the new priest to do.... Their two requests were for a priest who would celebrate the eucharist with them each week and who would continue to give communion to the infants and young children who came to that eucharist."

To me as a Calvinist, both of these two requests sound outrageously sacramentalistic. Priest David Holeton seems also to favour liaison with the increasingly-paedocommunionizing and theologically-liberal World Council of Churches.<sup>1433</sup> Apparently from these perspectives, he wrongly asserts<sup>1434</sup> that "both Justin and Hippolytus speak of the baptismal Eucharist in such a way that all those who have been baptized must also be seen as receiving the Eucharist immediately after their Baptism."

Yet, more soberly, even the Paedocommunionist Holeton then adds:<sup>1435</sup> "There are some who would argue that it was inconceivable to either Justin or Hippolytus that one could be initiated into the body of Christ without receiving both Baptism and the Eucharist.... It is in that area, however, that we [from Holeton's paedocommunionistic perspective!] still have insufficient data to risk dating the beginning of the practice. Here there is still an area of darkness."

Yes indeed. "Darkness" admitted to by the Paedocommunionist Holeyton. But not darkness to illuminated Antipaedocommunionists who have studied Justin and Hippolytus etc. in depth.

The Paedocommunionist, Tommy Lee, has written a 28-page article with the impressive title *The History of Paedocommunion*.<sup>1436</sup> Note, not *A History of Paedocommunion* but rather *The History of Paedocommunion*. Although many of his paedocommunionistic colleagues often tout it as the definitive work<sup>1437</sup> on that subject, it hardly lives up to all such rather pretentious claims.

Interestingly, Paedocommunionist Tommy Lee himself concedes:<sup>1438</sup> "To be fair to objectors, I must make it clear that they [viz. Antipaedocommunionists] are really only objecting to the idea that Paedocommunion was common in the first and second centuries of the Church.... This information is very 'accidental.' If Paedocommunion was the common, ancient, non-controversial practice that I am arguing it was - then this is exactly what we would expect. The ancient sources do not discuss Paedocommunion."

Note that Tommy Lee has wrongly assumes Antipaedocommunionists are objecting "only to the idea that Paedocommunion was common in the first and second centuries of the Church." However, this assumption is ridiculous. For in fact, Antipaedocommunionists are objecting *inter alia* also to the idea that Paedocommunion was found at all in the first and second centuries of the Church - outside of crackpot heretical and neo-paganistic or semi-pagan sects such as those of the Marcionites.

Yet even Paedocommunionist Tommy Lee admits:<sup>1439</sup> "Years before Keidel's article [viz. his 1975 pro-paedocommunionistic publication titled *Is the Lord's Supper for Children?*], Theodore G. Tappert remarked that 'whether children participated in the Lord's Supper with their parents during the first centuries cannot be determined with certainty for want of evidence, but it is unlikely.'"

Amazingly, the above is just about the full thrust of Tommy Lee's Pre-Cyprianic Ante-Nicene 'evidence.' Indeed, his first major citations in favour of Paedocommunion seem to be those he culls from the rather late Gennadius (A.D. 495) and the 1908 Catholic Encyclopedia.<sup>1440</sup>

Over against the paedocommunionistic Tommy Lee's sometimes-admitted Ante-Nicene agnosticism, however - stand authentic scholars such as Beckwith, Coppes, and Jeremias. Together with the present writer, they not only find no Pre-Cyprianic evidence whatsoever for the practice of Paedocommunion in the Early-Christian Church. They there also find much evidence against this novel notion.

Take, for example, R.T. Beckwith's famous article *The Age of Admission to the Lord's Supper*. There, he concludes that "in the remotest antiquity it appears that infant and child communion did not exist."<sup>1441</sup>

Next, consider Rev. Dr. Leonard Coppes's own seminal book on Paedocommunion. There, he affirms<sup>1442</sup> that "the early fathers seem to have barred infants and children from participating in the Lord's Supper."

Also, consult Rev. Professor Dr. Joachim Jeremias's famous book *The Origins of Infant Baptism*. There, while rightly affirming the apostolic origins of Infant Baptism - he is equally adamant in equally rightly insisting that children did not participate in the Lord's Supper before the third century.

He says: 1443 "As concerns the Eucharist, Aland...thinks it possible (in my opinion hardly correctly) that the communion of small children attested by Cyprian for the third century...was already customary at the beginning of the second century.... The ritual of the passover meal does provide for the participation of children - yet only of such as can ask questions and receive instruction (Pesachim 10:4)" cf. Exodus 12:26-37 & 12:43-49.

Indeed, that is the opinion too of this present writer (Francis Nigel Lee). I myself claim it is not until the A.D. 251 Cyprian, that there is any evidence whatsoever in favour of Paedocommunion. In fact, I would even state that Pagan Paedocommunionism only then - for the first time ever - was barely just beginning to infiltrate the mainline Christian Church in and around Carthage. And I would further claim that Cyprian did not approve but (at the very least mildly) disapproved of that noxious innovation.

Moreover, I would yet further claim that after Cyprian - also the Post-Cyprianic Ante-Nicene Fathers all resisted this pernicious practice. In fact, it was not until more than a third of the way through the fourth century - that anyone in the then-deforming mainline Christian Church ever began to approve of it. But that I shall argue copiously, only in the next chapters.

#### 495. Summary: The Pre-Cyprianic Orthodoxy of the Post-Apostolic Lord's Supper

Summarizing this present chapter, we have seen above that the Biblical doctrine of catechizing before initial admission to manducation at the Eucharist not prior to puberty - was maintained in the Early Church at least until the A.D. 250 Cyprian. There is no Pre-Cyprianic evidence at all to suggest that the Early Church ever practised Paedocommunion. To the contrary, nearly all of the extant Early-Patristic Fathers strongly (even if sometimes but implicitly) evidence exactly the opposite.

Even in the hundred years after Cyprian, there was no support for the pagan practice of Paedocommunion which then started trickling into the Christian Church. Also thereafter, Antipaedocommunionism was never totally extinguished - and it was resurrected prominently once again at the glorious times of the Pre-Reformation and the Protestant Reformation.

There was no Paedocommunionism in the Church before the time of Cyprian. Indeed, we shall later see, against the rising tide of paedocommunionistic Paganism which only around A.D. 250 first started invading the Church - that the Antipaedocommunionism of the Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers was maintained also by Cyprian and his successors at least until Post-Nicene times.

Both the Older and the Newer Testaments, considered collectively, teach that adolescence is

the minimum age-threshold for admission to manducation at the Second Sacrament even for graduated Catechumens. Exodus 12:3,26,37,43-49; Numbers 9:6-14; Proverbs 22:6; Luke 2:41-47f & 22:1-20; First Corinthians 3:2 & 11:23f & 13:8 & 14:20 & 16:13; and Hebrews 5:12 to 6:5f.

So too does Ignatius. And the Didachee, Justin, Irenaeus, the Liturgy of St. James, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Commodian, Origen and the Syrian Didaskalia all teach the necessity of prior catechization.

For antecedent instruction before admission to manducation at the Eucharist, was given much emphasis in the Didachee and in Justin Martyr. It was implied by both Ignatius and Pliny. Theophilus and Athenagoras repudiated the vicious 'transubstantiationistic' charge (made by Pagans) that the Christians were cannibals. The Liturgy of St. James excluded also Catechumens from manducation at the Eucharist. Indeed, Irenaeus stressed the absolute necessity of catechizing - prior to admission to that Second Sacrament. And Tertullian even more so.

Clement and his Catechetical School in Alexandria (as was indeed also the case in similar Schools in all of the other major cities of the Roman Empire), insisted on thorough instruction before first being fed with the holy bread and wine. Hippolytus in Rome and Origen in Alexandria expressly repudiated the very notion of 'Child Communion.' Indeed, also in Syria, both Commodian and the Didaskalia emphasized post-catechetical and pre-communionistic Confirmation.

Even the A.D. 251 Cyprian disapprovingly noted only rare instances of 'child communion' with idols - and one solitary ecclesiastical 'communional exorcism' thereagainst - which were only then just beginning to creep into the Church of Carthage. For he too, against a sudden resurgence of aggressive Paganism then trying to invade even the Christian Church especially in his own central part of Northern Africa, clearly upheld the attainment of maturity after being catechized as a main pre-requisite for admission to manducating the bread and the wine of the Eucharist. But that will be dealt with only hereafter - in our next chapter.

## **CH. 7: EVEN THE SACRAMENTALIZING CYPRIAN OPPOSED PAEDOCOMMUNION**

Cyprian was a life-long resident of the Central North African Carthage, a wayward and worldly city which had practised Pagan Paedocommunionism ever since Heathen Phoenicians *via* Phrygia had colonized it in Pre-Christian times. The Church was established in Carthage toward the end of the second century A.D., where the antipaedocommunionism of its pre-catechetical Tertullian became the ecclesiastical standard ever since its inception at that time.

Cyprian was born into Paganism during A.D. 200 and grew up in Carthage as an Anti-Christian Heathen. He was not converted till A.D. 246. Thereafter, that mature convert studied and revered the antipaedocommunionistic Bible and the writings of his 'master' the antipaedocommunionistic Tertullian - every day.

Thus, since becoming a Christian when forty-six, Cyprian too had a Proto-Calvinistic view: of Church Government (Presbyterial rather than either Prelatic or Independent); and of the Sacraments (despite his own incipient sacramentalism). For Cyprian was paedobaptistic, anti-paedocommunionistic, and spiritualistically-realistic (alias anti-transubstantiationistic and anti-figurativistic) as regards the Eucharist. Accordingly, during the Pagan Emperor Decius's persecution of the Church in Carthage - Cyprian fought against Pagan Paedocommunionism outside the Church. He also fought against the sudden beginning of the infiltration of the Carthaginian Church by that same pagan-paedocommunionistic infection which then, during that persecution from A.D. 249 onward, tried to corrupt even the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

In his battle to purge the Church of such sudden syncretisms, seems probable that Cyprian himself unwittingly veered some distance toward sacramentalistic later doctrines such as baptismal regenerationism *etc.* Too, in his zeal - it seems he may even have countenanced exorcism as a means of dealing with corruptions at Communion Services. Yet he was, doubtless, solidly antipaedocommunionistic.

Very important is Cyprian's treatise On the Lapsed - regarding the terms of (re-)admission to the Eucharist in the Church Universal of those who had lapsed from the Church. Such were the semi-repaganized backsliders who sought re-communionization in the Church after the A.D. 251 cessation of her persecutions by Carthage's then-pagan majority.

In chapter nine of that work, he describes that apostasy - and the repaganizing communing of the lapsed before idols. He develops this theme in chapters twenty-five and twenty-six - with specific reference to pagan paedocommunionizings by heathen Magistrates outside the Church, and also by a novel syncretistic paedocommunionizing by a wayward Deacon inside the Church.

These events were to some extent later misinterpreted by Augustine - and especially by various kinds of Pro-Paedocommunionists such as the Eastern-'Orthodox' and by certain Quasi-Protestants like Taylor, Bingham, Rushdoony, Keidel, Leithart, G.N. Davies, and Tommy Lee. Nevertheless, Cyprian and Augustine rejected not only idolatrous Pagan Paedocommunion. Cyprian rejected also all ecclesiastical paedocommunionizings. Indeed, even the still more sacramentalistic and later Augustine rejected Infant-Communion - and the eucharizing of all

uncatechized children.

Finally, apart from his third *Treatise on the Lapsed*, all of Cyprian's other extant writings clearly teach **catechizing before eucharizing** and are at least implicitly antipaedocommunionistic. Such include his *Treatises* 5 & 9 & 12. They include also many of his 'pro-catechetical pre-eucharistic' *Epistles* (such as 2,3,9,10,11,24,25,26,51,52,53,55,62,72 & 74).

This means that also modern Paedocommunionists can find **no** reference in **Cyprian favouring Paedocommunion** as a **customary ecclesiastical practice**. Indeed, they have no other references in later Early-Church Fathers either - **until the times of Augustine one hundred and fifty years later (circa A.D. 400)**. Even then, Augustine's references **preclude** the communing of both infants and **uncatechized** small children - and are inferred from his Anti-Pelagian sacramentalistic theology. Such still did not involve actual manducation by uncatechized children present together with the manducating 'Faithful' (Communicants) during the Communion Services.

#### **496. The Pagan Paedocommunionistic Background of Cyprian's Carthage**

It is very important to understand the background of that strand of Paedocommunionistic Paganism in Carthage which started to invade at least one of the persecuted Christian churches there around A.D. 250. That kind of Paganism had drifted to the Phoenician-Phrygian colony of Carthage in Africa, from Jezebel's Tyre and Sidon *via* Phrygia<sup>1444</sup> - already before B.C. 220.

The very word 'Africa' - is derived from the word 'Phrygia.' The 1929 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in its article on the 'Great Mother of the Gods' Cybele, states: "The legends agree in locating the rise of the worship of the Great Mother in Asia Minor in the region of...the Phrygian Empire of prehistoric times." Phrygia, like Carthage, was a colony of Phoenicia.

As the above *Britannica* notes in its article on 'Astarte' - that was "a Semitic goddess whose name appears in the Bible as Ashtoreth. She is everywhere the great female principle - answering to the Baal of the Canaanites and Phoenicians, and the Dagon of the Philistines. She had temples at Sidon and Tyre, whence her worship was transplanted to Carthage.... As patroness of the hunt, later identification with Artemis was inevitable. Hence the consequent fusion with Aphrodite, Artemis, Diana, Juno, and Venus."

The 1948 *Encyclopaedia Americana* in its excellent article on 'Astarte' calls the notorious Near-Eastern false-deity Venus - "a Syrian goddess, probably identical with the Semele of the Greeks.... In First Samuel 31:10, Astarte is...mentioned - as also the fact that a temple was built to her in Ashkelon [in Philistia]. There were also temples...in Carthage... The Syrians also built a famous temple to her in Hierapolis, at Tyre, and at Sidon. She is probably identical with the Assyrian goddess Ishtar or Istar the 'Lady' - the 'Queen of the gods'" alias Cybele the 'Queen of heaven' mentioned in Jeremiah 7:16-22 & 44:15-22 to which also **children co-sacrificed!**

The B.C. 29f Roman Poet Virgil<sup>1445</sup> rightly says that the above religion came to **Carthage** from the Phoenicians *via* their colony in Phrygia. So too does the A.D. 298 North African Christian Arnobius, who traces the Cataphrygian heresy back to the pagan religion of the goddess

Cybele.

Arnobius rightly says<sup>1446</sup> that this religion came from the Phoenicians *via* their colony in Phrygia (*cf.* Revelation 2:12-14 & 2:18-21 *etc.*). He then goes on to state that "the Phrygian 'Mother (of the gods)'...was first set up as a goddess by Midas or Dardanus - when Hannibal the Carthaginian was plundering Italy" in B.C. 218.

The famous Christian Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff insists:<sup>1447</sup> "The inhabitants of the provinces of Northern Africa were of Semitic origin.... The **Phoenicians**, a **remnant of the Canaanites**..., carried on the commerce of the World.... Occupying a narrow strip of territory on the Syrian coast between Mount Lebanon and the sea, the Phoenicians sent their merchant vessels from Tyre and Sidon to all parts of the Old World.... They founded on the northernmost coast of **Africa**, more than eight hundred years before Christ, the colony of **Carthage**.... The Phoenician or Punic name is *Karthada*.... It means New City.... The word *Kereth* or *Carth* enters also into the names of other cities **of Phoenician origin**, as *Cirta* in Numidia....

"From that favorable position, they acquired the control over the northern coast of Africa from the pillars of Hercules...over Southern Spain, the islands of Sardinia and Sicily, and the whole Mediterranean Sea. Hence the inevitable rivalry between Rome and Carthage.... Hence the three **Punic Wars** which, in spite of the brilliant military genius of Hannibal, ended in the utter destruction of the capital of North Africa (B.C. 146).... But under Augustus...there arose a new Carthage on the ruins of the old, and became a rich and prosperous city - first Heathen; then Christian."

Important too is the assessment of Dr. Kenneth Scott Latourette in his famous book series on the history of the expansion of Christianity - the volume titled *The First Five Centuries*. States Latourette:<sup>1448</sup>

"On the north shore of Africa west of Egypt, and especially in and around Carthage in the present Tunis and Algeria, Christianity was very strong - by the time of Constantine [A.D. 321f].... The population was a mixture of older stocks which we call collectively the Berbers, with such later arrivals as **Phoenicians**.... The Berbers formed the masses of the rural population; the **Phoenician** or **Punic** elements, the urban proletariat."

Dr. W.H.C. Frend, in his doctoral dissertation on the Early Church in North Africa, states<sup>1449</sup> that "Africa means primarily Carthage. Memories remain of the Punic Wars, of Scipio and Hannibal.... But the emphasis is on Carthage - and in later classical times on the Proconsular Province, the 'granary of Rome.'

#### **497. Establishment and character of the Pre-Cyprianic Church in Carthage**

We have seen in our previous chapter that Paedocommunion is foreign to the practice of the extant Apostolic Fathers and all of their early successors. All of them, without any exception, maintained the Antipaedocommunionism of both the Older Testament and the Apostolic Church. The same is true also of the Early Church in Carthage.

According to Frend: "In Africa, Christianity first made its way to Carthage and to the Tunisian coast towns - and hence, from the first, was centred in them.... Christianity does not appear to have prospered in Africa before the second half of the second century A.D...."

"The origins of the Church at Carthage are...obscure.... There is no mention of any Christian community whatsoever before A.D. 180, and no Bishop [or Overseer] of Carthage is recorded prior to...the turn of the third century."<sup>1450</sup>

We have already seen that the great Tertullian of Carthage (A.D. *circa* 145 to 220) was **strongly antipaedocommunionistic**.<sup>1451</sup> He was "reared in the cultured **Paganism** of Carthage,"<sup>1452</sup> and became a Christian about A.D. 185 when approximately forty years old. By A.D. 190 he had become a **Presbyter**,<sup>1453</sup> and indeed an accomplished **Catechist**.<sup>1454</sup>

During the reign of the African-born<sup>1455</sup> Emperor of the Roman Empire Septimius Severus (A.D. 193-211), Christians were persecuted. In A.D. 203, the young Carthaginian noblewoman Perpetua was arrested with four fellow **Catechumens**, including Felicitas who gave birth to a daughter in prison - apparently in Carthage. They were baptized, and joined by their **Catechist**, with whom four other Christians perished in the amphitheatre. This is reflected very clearly indeed in the Quasi-Tertullianic<sup>1456</sup> writing titled *The Passion of Perpetua*.<sup>1457</sup>

The *Passion* states,<sup>1458</sup> *inter alia*: "The young **Catechumens** Revocatus and his fellow-servant Felicitas...were apprehended.... Among them also was Vivia Perpetua, respectably born [into Heathenism], liberally educated, a married matron" - as well as "two brothers, one of whom like herself was a **Catechumen**; and an infant son at the breast. She herself was about twenty-two years of age.... Felicitas [in prison]...brought forth a little girl...."

"The day of their victory shone forth, and they proceeded from the prison into the amphitheatre.... Felicitas, rejoicing that she had safely brought forth so that she might fight with the wild beasts - from the blood and from the midwife, to the gladiator - to wash after childbirth [and a first Baptism with water] with a second baptism [of blood]...."

"Perpetua was received by a certain one who was still a **Catechumen**, Rusticus.... She recognized the **Catechumen**.

"Afterwards causing that **Catechumen** and the brother to approach, she addressed them, saying: 'Stand fast in the faith..., and do not be offended at my sufferings!'... Perpetua...being pierced between the ribs, cried out loudly; and she herself placed the wavering right hand of the youthful gladiator to her throat."

In this short work of but seven pages, the word "**Catechumen**" appears no less than at least five times. All of those then jailed, including two infants, were then baptized. However, **none of them were eucharized**. Because all were martyred in the amphitheatre before being confirmed - and **even those who had started being instructed, had not yet had their catechizations completed**.

As Latourette indicates:<sup>1459</sup> "In Carthage, occurred several martyrdoms of Catechumens - that of Perpetua being especially notable." Such began in the reign of the Pagan Emperor Septimius Severus - and broke out again later during the reigns of Decius, Valerian, and Diocletian.



Yet the Church in Carthage grew, even under the reign of the tyrant Septimius Severus. By A.D. 220, seventy African and Numidian Overseers met in a Synod under the Moderatorship of Overseer Agrippinus of Carthage.<sup>1460</sup>

As Frend notes:<sup>1461</sup> "The long peace that lasted from the death of Septimius Severus [in A.D. 211] to the accession of Decius [in A.D. 249], may have witnessed in many African towns the conversion of the majority of religiously-minded people to Christianity." That was good. Thus, by A.D. 236-248, ninety Overseers met in a Synod under the Moderatorship of Donatus, apparently in Carthage.<sup>1462</sup>

On the other hand, however, Carthage was still saturated with Paganism. Frend elucidates:<sup>1463</sup> "Magic, astrology and animistic beliefs seems to have taken a greater hold on the minds of the literate and illiterate alike.... The Christian message may have sounded to many as the restatement of age-old beliefs and hopes that were tending to become lost in the syncretist Paganism of the third century."

Not surprisingly, this soon produced first a syncretism between antipaedocommunionistic Christianity and the paedocommunionistic Paganism of Carthage. Just a little later, under persecution, it produced also a backsliding away from Christianity into Neo-Heathenism (and the latter's Pagan Paedocommunionism).

Frend shows too that "the 'Evil Eye' remained - whether the African was Pagan or Christian.... It was no accident that Carthage...where Christianity made its earliest appearance [in North Africa], should also have produced more evidence for magical practices than any other centres....

"In the popular view, Christianity was often regarded as powerful magic.... The acceptance of Christianity therefore did not mean for the majority any real break with the basic concepts of African Paganism.... Christianity became identified by converts...with a **Punic cultural revival**."

So, claims Frend:<sup>1464</sup> "At each successive crisis - under Septimus Severus [A.D. 193-211], Decius [249-251] and Valerian [253-260]; and under Diocletian [284-305] - the Church in Africa split apart." It is true that "the period between 212 and 250 - which [the A.D. 362f Christian Church Historian] Sulpicius Severus calls the '38 years of peace' - favoured the progress of...the African Church. It was a period of appreciable advance for Christianity in the African cities.... But the majority of new believers were not fitted to practise the faith as interpreted by the 'Puritans' of Tertullian's day."

Then, however, came a "renewal of persecution under Decius [A.D. 249-251].... At the same time, with the Decian persecutions, begins the development of the first of the 'Puritan' Schisms on a provincial basis...in Phrygia and North Africa."

#### **498. The life and times of Cyprian and the Decian persecution in Carthage**

Cyprian was born in Carthage in 200 A.D.<sup>1465</sup> Dr. Schaff tells us he "sprang from a noble and wealthy **heathen** family of Carthage."<sup>1466</sup> Indeed, "in his earlier years" - before his conversion to Christianity around A.D. 245 when fully forty-five years old - Frend explains<sup>1467</sup> that "Cyprian...had been an opponent of the new religion - and had spoken out against the Christians, in public." Thus too the famous Early-Church Historian Jerome.<sup>1468</sup>

Gradually, continues Frend, Cyprian began to heed the arguments on the other side - and to compare the Christian outlook with the Paganism which he was defending. He saw the society around him as barren, corrupt, and lacking in inspiration. He came into contact with the works of Tertullian - and realized (as Cyprian himself later admitted) that his own life had been one of 'darkness, ignorance of self, and estrangement.'<sup>1469</sup>

Schaff further relates:<sup>1470</sup> "A worthy Presbyter, Caecilius, who lived in Cyprian's house..., first made him acquainted with the doctrines of the Christian religion, and moved him to read the Bible. After long resistance Cyprian forsook the world, entered the class of **Catechumens**..., and in 245 or 246 received Baptism....

"Cyprian now devoted himself zealously...to the study of the Scriptures and the Church Teachers, especially [to the **antipaedocommunionistic**] **Tertullian** whom he called for **daily** with the words: 'Hand me the **master!**'.... So Jerome relates in his notice on Tertullian.... Cyprian might personally have known Tertullian, who lived at least till the year 220 or 230....

"Only two years after his Baptism...Cyprian was raised to the Bishopric [or Overseership] of Carthage by the acclamations of the people, and was thus at the same time placed at the head of the whole North African clergy.... For the space of ten years, ending with his triumphant martyrdom, Cyprian administered the [Overseeing Presbyter's] Episcopal Office in Carthage with exemplary energy, wisdom and fidelity - and that in a most stormy time, amidst persecutions from without and schismatic agitations within" such as the **novelty of Pagan Paedocommunionism** which only then began to trickle into the then-persecuted Church of Carthage. See Cyprian's *Treatise III:25-26* (on the **Lapsed**)!

Frend observes:<sup>1471</sup> "To Cyprian himself...acceptance of Christ meant the complete rejection of pagan civilization.... **Scriptural quotations** play a '*tyrannical*' role in Cyprian's writings - but **never once is a pagan author cited.**"

When the Decian persecution started in A.D. 249, to Cyprian "the powers of evil seemed to be personified in the...**Magistrates**."<sup>1472</sup> See the opening five sentences in his *Treatise III:25* (on 'the Lapsed'). "Yet the Christians did not take up arms against their enemies. Martyrdom was their means to victory."<sup>1473</sup> Thus Frend.

Here are Cyprian's above-mentioned five sentences. "Learn what occurred when **I myself** was present and a witness! Some **parents** who...were escaping [from the pagan persecution of Christianity]..., **careless** because they were then terrified, had left a little daughter under the care of a nurse. The nurse handed over the **forsaken** child to the [**pagan**] **Magistrates**. **They**, in the presence of an **idol** to which **people flocked**, gave the child **bread mingled with wine**" which had previously been **dedicated to that idol**. That bread mingled with wine "was itself the remainder of

what had been used in the immolation" alias the sacrificial food-gift which had previously been dedicated to that pagan idol.

According to Dr. K.S. Latourette,<sup>1474</sup> the A.D. 249-251 Pagan Roman Emperor "Decius was acclaimed by Non-Christian writers as a personification of the old Roman.... He may have believed that the calamities of the times were due to a neglect of the sacrifices to the state gods. If so, a necessary road to recovery - would be a re-awakening of loyalty to these deities.

"He would, therefore, require all citizens to sacrifice.... The disturbance to the Church was very great.... Sacrifice to the gods was what was demanded, and those who complied were given certificates showing their 'orthodoxy.' Some who had not so sacrificed, purchased certificates.... These certificates or *libelli* were required of all inhabitants of the Empire - citizens and non-citizens, Christians and Non-Christians.

"Decius was apparently making a determined effort to restore the worship of the **state cult**, and wished to make all conform. Geographically, the persecution was widely extended. We hear of it in...North Africa....

"Cyprian the Bishop [or Overseer] of Carthage...sought refuge outside his... city - presumably not because of cowardice. For he met martyrdom [under Emperor Valerian] bravely, eight years later.

"He sought refuge during the Decian persecution, "for what he deemed the best interests of his flock.... From Cyprian, we gather that on the eve of the Decian persecution - covetousness, false-swearing, quarrelling and luxury had crept into the Church."

Frend explains that<sup>1475</sup> "when persecution [under Decius] broke out in 249, it bore to a much greater degree the stamp of official action than formerly." Schaff agrees, and gives a fuller assessment.

"Decius," explains Schaff,<sup>1476</sup> was "an earnest and energetic Emperor." He "resolved to root out the Church..., and in the year 250 published an edict to all the Governors of the Provinces enjoining return to the pagan state religion under the heaviest penalties.... The authorities were specially severe with the Bishops [or Overseers] and Officers of the churches.... Fabianus...and Alexander...perished in this persecution. Others withdrew to places of concealment.... Among the latter was Cyprian Bishop [or Overseer] of Carthage, who incurred much censure by his course - but fully vindicated himself by his pastoral industry during his absence, and by his subsequent martyrdom" under Emperor Valerian in A.D. 258.

#### **499. Cyprian on pagan Paedocommunion's attack on the Church around 250 A.D.**

Cyprian had eruditely been trained as a rhetorician. Converted to Christ by the Carthaginian Presbyter Caecilius around A.D. 246, he quickly expounded the Church's early canons and constitutions in an orderly and disciplined way.

Greatly stressing the need for orthodox Presbyters during a time of persecution and confusion, he could be regarded as a Western version of Ignatius of Antioch (*ubi Episcopus ibi Ecclesia*) - especially against the background of the Church's then-turbulent days especially in Carthage. Yet his insistence on parity of Presbyters and his opposition to the pretensions of Stephen of Rome in the controversies regarding the rebaptizability of the lapsed, brands him (in spite of his increasing sacramentalism) - at least ecclesiologically - far more as an Anti-Prelatical Proto-Presbyterian than as a Proto-Episcopalian.<sup>1477</sup>

Cyprian's then-contemporary<sup>1478</sup> biographer, Pontius the Deacon, commences his work on *The Life and Passion of Cyprian (Bishop and Martyr)* - with a reference to "**Catechumens**." He goes on to ask: "Who was there [apart from Cyprian] to **teach penitence to the lapsed, truth to heretics, unity to schismatics, peacefulness and the law** of evangelical prayer to the sons of God?"

For - continues Pontius - it behooves or "'becomes us,' said he [Cyprian], 'to **answer** to our [re]birth.... It is not fitting that those who are evidently born of God should be degenerate - but rather that the propagation of a good Father should be proved in His offspring by the emulation of His goodness.'"

Finally, when Cyprian was martyred, to his own spiritual father the "just man...Caecilius...who had converted him..., he [Cyprian] commended to him [Caecilius] his [Cyprian's] **wife and children**."<sup>1479</sup> Clearly, Cyprian was no mediaeval advocate or practitioner of clerical celibacy!

Most of Cyprian's own extant writings are concerned with Church Order and Ecclesiology, rather than principally with Sacramentology. Yet the much he says about the need of re-catechizing the lapsed before re-communicating them - and the little he says about and against Pagan Paedocommunionism - are very relevant to our topic. Accordingly, we begin first with the last.

Sadly, during the days of the awful A.D. 250f Decian persecution of Christians by pagan Paedocommunionists in Carthage - we find parents apostasizing from the Church and partaking of pagan sacrifices. Implicitly, we perhaps here encounter just a little indirect evidence of such apostate parents even forcing their own children to do likewise (in order to avoid persecution).

Here we encounter also the first extant example, by forceful heathen Magistrates, of intincting one of the Church's little girls when she was an infant - with a mixture of bread and wine previously dedicated to an idol. Indeed, here we encounter also - at a confused Church Service - the first extant example of a wayward Deacon breadlessly force-feeding communion wine into the same little girl then deemed to be demon-oppressed.

Now here we see the A.D. 250f Church Father Cyprian very disapprovingly mention one instance of parents forsaking the Lord's bread and cup themselves, and removing themselves and their tiny infants-in-arms from the Christian Church. And a little later, we see Cyprian again very disapprovingly mention one instance of a little girl eating bread mixed with wine previously dedicated to idols - and later being 'exorcised' with sacramental wine.<sup>1480</sup>

Paedocommunionists quite wrongly allege that the events surrounding the above-mentioned little girl - evidence 'Child Communion' in the Early Christian Church! Even if that were to be so, however, it would be the **only possible** case there mentioned - in the time of Cyprian.

Yet it is not so! Instead, it is but a weird and irregular aberration occurring only during the paganizing Decian persecutions of 250-251 A.D.

This case is referred to by the 251 A.D. Cyprian.<sup>1481</sup> He describes how a little girl became 'demon-possessed' - after some Pagans forced her to drink wine previously dedicated to an idol.

Later, her mother and a Deacon - apparently in a superstitious attempt to try to 'exorcise' the demon - **forced** that little girl unwillingly to drink **sacramental wine**. That occurred while she attended a church service, during the Congregation's celebration of Holy Communion.

Significantly, however, Cyprian says **nothing** here of **sacramental bread** being forced upon the little girl by the wayward Deacon. Only about force-feeding the little girl with "the cup" containing **wine**. Consequently, Cyprian's whole story - of which he himself was a revolted eye-witness - is incapable of being used as normative in respect of the Lord's Supper.<sup>1482</sup>

Now Cyprian of Carthage says that he himself was an eye-witness of the above syncretized and neo-paganizing 'Paedocommunion' (*sic*). He was at that time the overseeing Bishop of Carthage during the A.D. 250f persecutions under the Pagan Caesar Decius when the above example (misalleged to be one of 'Paedocommunion') occurred.

Let it be remembered that Carthage was then an ages-long colony of both the Phrygians as well as their ancestral Phoenicians, and that sodomites and whores begged alms for the Syrian goddess in Carthage even down to the later time of Augustine.<sup>1483</sup> To Phrygia and to Carthage, the Phoenicians had imported<sup>1484</sup> many of the pagan rites of Baal and Astarte previously practised in the Near East. There, "the **children** gather[ed] wood..., and the women knead[ed] their **dough** - to make **cakes** to 'the queen of heaven' and to pour out **drink offerings** to **other gods**." Jeremiah 7:17f; 44:17f; Ezekiel 8:6 to 9:6; 16:19-21,36; 20:24-32; Revelation 2:18-23.

The 251f A.D. Cyprian indeed mentions an exorcistic practice which had crept into a church in Carthage during the Decian persecutions. Moreover, that practice does vaguely resemble the later 'Child Communion' - or rather 'Infant-Intinction' now practised in 'Eastern-Orthodox' Churches. However, it was a practice borrowed from Paganism - and introduced into certain Sub-Christian circles during a particularly-pernicious time when Pagans were persecuting the saints in Carthage during the middle of the third century A.D.

Yet Cyprian himself, though a Sacramentalizer, hardly approved of this 'Paedocommunionism' either inside or outside of the Church's practice. Indeed, for the next two centuries (till about 450 A.D.), many Post-Cyprianic Fathers implicitly opposed it - also on account of their great stress on the necessity of Pre-Communion **catechization**. Thus: Dionysius of Rome, Dionysius the Great of Alexandria, Novatian, Eusebius, Victorinus, Lactantius, Athanasius, Cyril, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom and Augustine.

From the A.D. 250 time of Cyprian onward, we shall later see how at least for nearly another century the mainline Ante-Nicene Church still maintained this Biblical Antipaedocommunionism. That was despite the ever-increasing infiltration of Christianity by pagan Paidocommunionism from Post-Nicene times onward. Indeed, for at least a decade even after Nicaea, one still finds **no** approval of child communion within the mainline Church.

### **500. Did the sacramentalizing Cyprian foreshadow later baptismal regenerationism?**

We have already discussed above some of the great strengths of Cyprian. Now let us now note also some of his weaknesses.

We rarely agree with Dr. Samuel Angus (Ph.D., D.Litt., D.D.) - sometime Professor of New Testament and Historical Theology at St. Andrew's College, University of Sydney. He was indeed very greatly in error - where he attributed also New Testament Christianity to Pagan Greek roots.

Yet what Angus claimed about the Late-Patristic Church, is true. For it is undeniable that the form-ed Church at length became increasingly de-formed. This occurred especially from the (250 A.D.) time of Cyprian onward - and more especially from about 350 onward. And that continued until the Church later became re-formed - in the days of the 1517f Protestant Re-form-ation.

Wrote Dr. Angus in a chapter on 'The Evolution of Magical-Sacramental Ideas and Usages' in his book *The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World*:<sup>1485</sup> "It was inevitable that [heathen/pagan Oriental and] Hellenic religion should leave a deep impression upon...later Christianity.... Hellenic converts became the pillars of the Church....

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

"In considering the history of Christian sacramentarianism..., the organization of the Catholic Church was largely the creation of the genius of Cyprian, who was a firm believer in magic.... One fact should never be allowed to drop out of sight in considering the history of Christian sacramentarianism. While the Sacraments took their rise[!] within Jewish traditions and from Jewish cult rites [*cf.* the adults-only Passover] - it was on **pagan** soil and under Hellenistic traditions and [paedocommunial Near-Eastern Oriental] Mysticism that they acquired their premier place in the life of the Church."

Thus, from around 250 A.D., averred Angus, "Christianity developed into the 'Catholic Church' - [at first] under the dominance of Gentile (Greek-Oriental) Christianity.... Cyprian [251 A.D.] cites four examples (*De Lapsis* 25-26) of the elements of the Sacrament partaken unworthily: one, on the inability of **a little girl** to consume the element...of the Sacrament after she had eaten the demon-charged food offered to idols....

"Such language presented no difficulties to Pagans.... The **sacramental meal of the 'Mysteries' had almost the vogue in popular religion [Paganism]**, which the Eucharist enjoys

today in [Roman and especially Greek] Catholic circles."

### **501. Cyprian and his handling of exorcistic corruptions at Communion**

The implications of this also for the Eucharist, now unfolded. Down through all the subsequent centuries - it led not only to the entrenched baptismal regenerationism but also to the increasing transubstantiationism of the Mediaeval Church.

Indeed, already from just before about A.D. 251, the Biblical Communion Services of the Early Church slowly started to deteriorate. For from that time onward - as James Hastings's (1912) *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* rightly points out in its article on the *Eucharist* - there commenced "a growing reverence, and even superstition, with which the consecrated elements were regarded." Indeed, the Christian Church now became increasingly invaded by many pagan ideas - including that of 'Communion' for small children.

Unintended yet striking corroboration of the above - also as regards the Church's Sacrament of Holy Communion alias the Eucharist - comes also from the camp of Traditionalistic Romanism. Thus Dr. B.V. Miller, the famous Roman Catholic Theologian and Oscott Professor of Dogmatic Theology at St. Mary's College.

In his book *The Eucharistic Sacrifice*,<sup>1486</sup> Dr. Miller has stated the position approximately: "All competent Scholars are agreed that from the end of the third century, the Catholic theology of the Mass was fixed as regards its substantial elements and that, on all sides, it was held to be the true and real sacrifice of Christ's body and blood.... It is maintained by many [*viz.* especially by Protestants] that this is a perversion of the primitive doctrine.... The principal author of the innovation and of the change in the current of theological tradition, is said to be St. Cyprian" - who flourished around 251 A.D.

We ourselves agree with Dr. Miller on this being the **beginning** of the turning point - even though we believe he greatly exaggerates Cyprian's sacramentalism. Too, it is precisely this Cyprian of Carthage, the Paedocommunionist Keidel **alleges**,<sup>1488</sup> who is "the first human witness" to the actual "practice" of "infant observance of the Lord's Supper."

Yes, Cyprian was indeed a "witness" to what **Keidel** calls "infant observance of the Lord's Supper." Yet in actual fact, Cyprian was **not an advocate** but only a "**witness**" - and a **disapproving** one! - of an infant novelly being force-fed breadlessly with communion wine by a wayward Deacon, in an attempt to exorcise a demon from the infant (apparently acquired when pagan Magistrates earlier gave the infant a mixture of bread and wine previously dedicated to idols).

We shall later establish that the paedocommunionistic perversion of the Holy Communion (after 250 and especially since 350-450 A.D.), was demonstrably derived from the primitive pagan practice of force-feeding tiny children (and even infants) with food and/or wine previously dedicated to idols. At this present point, however, we would establish merely Cyprian's **opposition** to this pernicious practice.

Indeed, we shall now establish also his **dissuasion** of the eccentric and exorcistic first facets of ecclesiastical 'Child-Communion.' Yet even these were still not yet the later further farces of

'Infant-Intinction' and 'Child-Communion' - in certain quirky quarters of the persecuted Church (around A.D. 350f).

Let it never be forgotten that Cyprian, though an Early 'Catholic' Christian, was also a heterodox Catabaptist! For Cyprian deviated from mainline Christianity at that time - with his insistence upon rebaptizing all those 'catholicized' from non-'catholic' yet trinitarian sects.

This rebaptistic viewpoint, was essentially magical and ritualistic. Fortunately, it was then successfully opposed - in the middle of the third century - by Stephen and Dionysius. Yet it introduced a permanent element of superstition, which spread especially in Post-Nicene times throughout the Catholic Church - and poisoned her for many centuries.

Still, in spite of the above, Cyprian himself did have a largely-orthodox view of the Lord's Supper. And that, in the teeth of some of the peculiarities of a novel form of Eucharist then creeping into the Church in his city of Carthage - as a result of some degree of recent syncretism with Pre-Cyprianic pagan practices there.

As Schaff points out in his *History of the Christian Church*:<sup>1489</sup> "The elements were common or leavened bread...and wine.... After the public service, the Deacons carried the consecrated elements to the sick" - contrary to Scripture, and contrary to the later *Westminster Confession of Faith* 29:3f to 28:4i. See: Acts 20:2f; First Corinthians 11:20f; Matthew 15:9.

"Many took portions of the bread home with them, to use in the family at morning prayer. This 'Domestic-Communion' was practised particularly in North Africa.... In the same country, in Cyprian's time, we find the custom of Infant-Communion...which was...continued in the Greek (and Russian) Church to this day, though irreconcilable with the Apostle's requisition of a preparatory examination (First Corinthians 11:28)." Thus Schaff.

Notice here exactly what Schaff says! He does not say that Infant-Communion was an Apostolic practice according to Scripture, practised throughout the Early Church everywhere in the first three centuries and subsequently. He says the very opposite.

Schaff here says that Infant-Communion was and is "practised particularly in North Africa" rather than elsewhere. He says it was practised precisely "in Cyprian's time" - and not before. He says it was practised "in the same country" of Cyprian, *viz.* in "North Africa."

But Schaff does not say that "Infant-Communion" was practised by Cyprian himself - nor that he approved of that practice. Indeed, Schaff says that it was indeed a practice "irreconcilable with the Apostle's requisition of a preparatory examination (First Corinthians 11:28)" - irreconcilable with Scripture itself, and therefore irreconcilable also with the Bible-believing and Bible-quoting Patristic Father Cyprian.

Dr. Schaff even adds<sup>1490</sup> that both Tertullian of Carthage and Cyprian of Carthage had a eucharistic "view approaching nearer the Calvinistic or Reformed.... Tertullian makes the words of institution Hoc est corpus Meum equivalent to figura corporis Mei.... This involves, at all events, an essential distinction between the consecrated elements and the body and blood of Christ in the Supper. Yet Tertullian must not be understood as teaching a merely symbolical presence of



Christ. For in other places, he speaks...of an eating of the body of Christ.... Cyprian likewise appears to favor a symbolical interpretation of the words of institution, yet not so clearly." Thus Schaff.

### **502. Cyprian's treatise *On the Lapsed* - regarding terms of (re-)admission to the Eucharist**

In Cyprian of Carthage's A.D. 251 treatise *Concerning the Lapsed* - he rightly castigates<sup>1491</sup> many backslidden adult Church Members. They had 'lapsed' during a (*circa* 250 A.D.) time of severe persecution by pagan politicians. For they had then compromised their own profession of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, in a desperate attempt to escape persecution, by themselves manducating at sacrifices offered to pagan idols - and (perhaps too) forcing even their own small children to do the same.

In this treatise, after pointing to the fall of the lapsed from orthodoxy and orthopraxy and indicating the reasons of the just-finished persecution of nominal Christians, Cyprian of Carthage reproaches his Church in North Africa for the relaxing of discipline and for communicating some persons unworthily and even re-communicating some of the lapsed unworthily. "Among the Presbyters," he complains, "there was no devotedness to religion. Among the Ministers, there was no sound faith.... In their manners, there was no discipline."<sup>1492</sup>

About their falling away from the Eucharist into pagan rites, Cyprian rightly complained the following about many Church Members:<sup>1493</sup> "To many, their own destruction was not sufficient. With mutual exhortations, people were urged to their [mutual] ruin. Death was pledged by turns - in the deadly cup [offered to the idols]. Infants also were either carried or conducted in the arms of their parents" - and thus by their own parents perhaps even forced to partake of that idolatrous cup, when the parents themselves had "forsaken the Lord's bread and cup to hasten freely to a profane contact" with sacrifices dedicated to false-gods *etc.*

Even if those infants were not themselves force-fed from the idolatrous cup by their apostate parents, they were certainly led away from the baptismal vows made by their parents at the time those infants themselves were baptized - many of them even while babies. For this reason, those infants would later justly complain "when the day of judgment comes" and when those formerly infants will all have been raised from the dead as adults (*cf.* First John 3:2) - that their parents "ruined us" and became "our murderers" when they "denied to us the Church as a Mother" *etc.* Thus Cyprian.

In that way, explained Cyprian, those infants too "lost - while themselves yet little ones - what in the very first beginning of their nativity, they had gained." For, while still tiny children, they had "lost" the ongoing benefits of church fellowship in "the Church as a Mother" - which had been sealed to them even when they were younger, by their previously-received Baptism.

Thus, in his Epistle Fifty-Eight, Cyprian corrects one Fidus for the latter's view "that one who is just born - should not be baptized." Adds Cyprian: "We all thought very differently in our Council" of the Church in Carthage. "Nobody is hindered from Baptism.... How much rather

ought we to shrink from hindering an infant!... By us, nobody ought to be hindered from Baptism.... It is...to be even more observed in respect of infants and newly-born persons."1494

It is very significant, however, that Cyprian never says anything remotely resembling such - in respect of either Infant-Intinction or Child-Communion. To the contrary, he always categorically insists on pre-catechizing - before communing anybody.

So, as regards Cyprian's Treatise III:9f, quite contrary to the views of certain modern Paedocommunionists and especially Eastern-Orthodox baby-intinctors, those thus-wronged erstwhile infants had never lost any initiated or ongoing infant ingestion of the Lord's Supper. For thereof, while infants, they had never partaken!

Instead, Cyprian there warns: "Will they [those infants] not, when the day of judgment comes, say: 'We [infants] have done nothing; nor have we forsaken the Lord's bread and cup - to hasten freely to a profane contact [the way many adult Church Members had then done]. The faithlessness of others has ruined us. We have found our parents [to be] our murderers. They have denied us the Church as a Mother."

Moreover, this same Third Treatise of Cyprian never advocates anything like an 'Open Table' also for sucklings and toddlers of Christian parents (nor for anyone else) Opposing all such laxity, Cyprian there declares:1495 "Brethren, a new kind of devastation has appeared. And, as if the storm of persecution had raged too little - there has been added to the heap...a deceiving mischief and a fair-seeming calamity....

"Contrary to the vigour of the Gospel, contrary to the Law of the Lord and God - by the temerity of some, Communion is relaxed to heedless persons - a vain and false peace dangerous to those who grant it and likely to avail nothing to those who receive it!... Returning from the altars of the devil, they draw near to the holy place of the Lord...[and] intrude on the body of the Lord - although the sacred Scripture stands in their way and cries out, saying: 'Every one that is clean shall eat of the flesh; but whatever soul eats of the flesh of the saving sacrifice...having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from his people' [Leviticus 7:20].

"The Apostle testifies and says, 'You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons! You cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the table of demons!' [First Corinthians 10:21]. He threatens, moreover, the stubborn and froward - and denounces them, saying 'Whosoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord' [First Corinthians 11:27].

"All these warnings being scorned and contemned..., they sin now against their Lord more with their hand and mouth than when they denied their Lord.... Such a facility does not...give communion, but it hinders from salvation.... If any one, by an overhurried haste, rashly thinks that he can give remission of sins to all or dares to rescind the Lord's precepts - not only does it in no respect advantage the Lapsed, but it does them harm....

"Let us weigh the deserts of our conscience! Let it come back upon our heart that we have not walked in the Lord's ways and have cast away God's Law and have never been willing to keep

His precepts and saving counsels!.... Because he may not at once receive the body of the Lord in his polluted hands - the sacrilegious one is angry with the Presbyters.... Oh, your excessive madness, O frantic one! You are angry with him who endeavours to avert the anger of God from you!"

Cyprian then remonstrates against these 'lapsed' ones: "Lo, what punishments do we behold, of those who have denied! What sad death of theirs, do we bewail! Not even [t]here can they be without punishment - although the [final] Day of [final] punishment has not yet arrived. Some are punished in the meantime - [so] that others may be corrected." Cf. First Corinthians 11:27-32.

Cyprian then immediately gives seven examples of punishments incurred by such 'lapsed' backsliders - and more especially by those who were improperly recommunicated after insufficient repentance. 1, One of them became dumb. 2, Another was seized by an unclean spirit and tore with her teeth the tongue with which she had impiously eaten. 3, Lapsed parents carelessly entrusted their infant to a wet-nurse who gave up the forsaken child to the pagan Magistrates who gave it in the presence of an idol bread mixed with wine. 4, One of her insufficiently-repentant parents later brought that same demon-oppressed infant to a church where a persistently-wayward Deacon kept on force-feeding that resisting and refusing infant with communion wine before that profane little girl vomited it up from her polluted stomach. 5, A mature woman who secretly stole into church and grabbed the sacrificial food, swallowed it as deadly poison and became quite stiffened with frenzy. 6, Then another unworthy woman who tried to access the body of the Lord - from daring to touch it - was deterred by fire rising from it. And 7, a defiled man who dared to receive part of the sacrifice - found it turned into a cinder in his hand.

From those seven examples of such wicked persons wrongly allowed to 'communicate' by receiving the Eucharist from misguided Church Officials, Cyprian then draws his conclusion. He declares: "How many there are daily who do not repent nor make confession of the consciousness of their crimes, who are filled with unclean spirits!"

Clearly, Cyprian was showing how God's wrath here rests upon all such indiscriminate 'communion' (sic). For such allows unqualified persons to manducate at the Lord's Supper.

Rather pathetically, Paedocommunionists ancient and modern appeal to the third or fourth examples just given three paragraphs above - as authority for their own pernicious practice of Paedocommunion. Let us therefore now take a much closer look at what Cyprian himself tells us about those matters.

#### 503. Further details specifically of Cyprian's Treatise III:25-34

At the beginning of chapter 25, Cyprian paints a grim picture of the then-recent pagan persecution of one particular church family in Carthage. He writes: "Some parents who...were escaping" - were too "little careful." They, "on account of their terror, left a little daughter under the care of a nurse.

"The nurse gave up the abandoned child to the [pagan] Magistrates" - who then "gave it, in the

presence of an idol where the people flocked, because it was not yet able to eat meat on account of its years, bread mixed with wine. This, however, was the left-over of what had been used in the sacrifice of those who had perished.

"Subsequently, the mother recovered her child. But the girl was no more able to speak or to understand the crime that had been committed, than she had before been able to understand or to prevent it."

Compare this former incident of the pagan Magistrates paedocommunionistically giving this little girl "bread mixed with wine" previously dedicated to "an idol" - to the pagan sacrifices Paul warned Christians against. Viz.: "My dearly beloved, flee from idolatry!... What am I then saying? That the idol is anything? Or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols, is anything?" No!

"But I am saying that the things which the Pagans sacrifice, they are sacrificing to demons and not to God - and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons! You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons! You cannot be partakers [or manducators] at the Lord's Table - and of the table of demons! [Why] Do we keep on provoking the Lord?!" See First Corinthians 10:14-22a.

Why had the Magistrates at Carthage given the pagan feast's "bread mixed with wine" even to the little girl? It seems those pagan Magistrates, during that short time of persecution of Christians, were trying to make the 'majority community practice' of Pagan Paedocommunion in Carthage, - a test for all, of political correctness and of loyal subjection to their rotten regime!

Cyprian then goes on in the rest of chapter 25 and in chapter 26 of that same Third Treatise, to deal with four gruesome abuses of the Lord's Table. First, he expresses dismay about a case he himself eye-witnessed - where a Deacon breadlessly force-fed communion wine to an infant (which latter then promptly vomited it up again). Second, he describes yet another case which he himself had eye-witnessed - where a mature female unbeliever illicitly grabbed the eucharistic communion elements (and ended up being mortally poisoned thereby).

Third, he relates the case of an "unworthy" woman whom he said was burned by fire when she touched the communion bread. And fourth, he narrates the case of a "defiled" man who, when he "dared with the rest to receive secretly a part of the sacrifice celebrated by the Presbyters," ended up holding in his hands not the holy bread but a cinder.

Of these four cases of pollutions at the Eucharist above, Cyprian says he regards the first two of them as a "crime." He then adds: "How many there are daily, who do not repent nor make confession of the consciousness of the crime - who are filled with unclean spirits!"

All Paedocommunionists therefore need to admit that Cyprian is here not advocating child communion. Yet the question is whether Cyprian approved of it - or disapproved of it.

Obviously the latter. For Cyprian here wants his readers to "learn" how the Lord's wrath falls on all who are given the Sacrament indiscriminately (cf. First Corinthians 10:21f & 11:27-32).

The last two cases of abuses of the Lord's Supper mentioned above, are not material to our subject of Paedocommunion. The first two cases above, are. Cyprian regarded each of them as a "crime." They are so important for our purposes, that we shall in due course deal with them in detail later below - and deal with the first at some length.

Cyprian then concludes his Third Treatise, by issuing a solemn warning against those who would give the Lord's Supper also to Non-Communicants. For there he declares that "when they ought to have stood fast - they fell! When they ought to fall and prostrate themselves to God - they think they stand fast!

"They have taken peace for themselves of their own accord - when nobody granted it! Seduced by false promises, and linked with apostates and unbelievers - they take hold of error, instead of truth! They regard a Communion as valid - with those who are not Communicants. They believe men against God, although they have not believed God against men. Flee from such men, as much as you can!"

#### 504. What Cyprian really says (and does not say) in chapter nine of his Third Treatise

Now it should be observed that Cyprian in chapter nine of this Treatise<sup>1496</sup> is not there saying that children (rightly or wrongly) either received or did not receive the Lord's Supper when children. Rather, he is saying there that "infants also in the arms of their parents" were carried away from the Church when their backslidden parents apostasized therefrom.

Cyprian is saying that children did not - while children - as some of their own parents as adults had indeed done - forsake the Supper. For the children later say (viz. when resurrected as adults on the day of judgment): "We have done nothing [wrong thus]; nor have we forsaken the Lord's bread and cup to hasten freely to a profane contact" - in the way their adult parents themselves had done during those persecutions by Pagans.

For the children's twofold use of the very word "we" (in the phrase "We have done nothing; nor have we forsaken the Lord's bread and cup") as had their apostate parents - is highly significant. Indeed, this strongly suggests that the children themselves - while yet children - had never, as did their parents, manducated at the Eucharist. Cf. too the word "ye" (and not "we") in Exodus 12:26 in respect of the Passover (now replaced by the Lord's Supper)!

Let Cyprian's description of the future conduct of those who were once the small children of lapsed parents, sink into modern Paedocommunionists! According to Cyprian, those children (when resurrected as adults on Judgment Day) shall say: "We have done nothing, nor have we forsaken the Lord's bread and cup to hasten freely to a profane contact.... We have found our parents" to be wicked!

On Judgment Day, those children shall then in their own defence argue against their parents who apostasized: "They...denied" to us the ecclesiastical care we had till then been receiving. For "while we were little and unforeseeing and unconscious" (even of the Lord's presence at His Table!), "we were snared" and "carried or conducted" away from the Church! Thus Cyprian.

We have already seen in his Fifty-Eighth Epistle above - that this same Cyprian insists on perpetuating in the Church the long-established practice of Infant-Baptism. Hence the above chapter nine of his treatise *On the Lapsed* is itself suggesting only that the children mentioned there had - prior to the apostasizing of their parents - previously been brought to the Church in order to receive Infant-Baptism (and not at all to receive Infant-Communion or even Child-Communion).

There is no suggestion whatsoever here, that those children themselves - while still children - then also manducated at the Lord's Supper. Indeed, rather is it very apparent that those children had not as children communicated at the Eucharist together with their communicating parents - before those parents themselves later forsook the Lord and His Supper.

Naturally, Cyprian is here certainly saying that those lapsing parents indeed then "carried" their (infantly-baptized) children off away from the Church.<sup>1497</sup> Perhaps it is also suggesting - though in that case only implicitly - that those repaganizing parents then forced their infants, with their own little mouths, unfreely to drink wine from the "deadly cup" of idols - as later explained in chapter 25 of Cyprian's same Third Treatise ('*On the Lapsed*').

But there is no suggestion at chapter 9 - nor, as we shall elsewhere see, anywhere else in that Treatise - that those children as children ever paedocommunionized at the Lord's Table. The end of chapter 25 is no exception to this, as we shall demonstrate later below.

As a result of their parents' apostasy, says Cyprian in chapter nine, those children thus - at least for a while - "lost" the blessings of their own former Infant-Baptism. But the passage does not say nor imply that the little children then at that tender age ever ate the Lord's Supper.

Of course, this would not necessarily affect the non-baptismal salvation of those infants. Yet, on Judgment Day, explains Cyprian - when those children are raised from the dead (*viz.* as adults) - they will indeed speak up and protest against their own parents' action in having carried them away from the fellowship of the God of their Baptism and of His Church.

It must be stressed once again that Cyprian does not here say that small children had ("freely") been admitted to the Lord's Supper while they were yet infants. Nor does he here say that such small childer had, together with their later-apostasizing parents, themselves "freely" apostasized unto idolatry.

If anything, Cyprian is here rather implying it was only after the apostasy of those parents who then removed also their children from the Church - that those children, when they themselves got yet older, were reclaimed for the Church. Namely reclaimed either during their earthly lives or toward their deaths when they themselves would enter into their next phase of existence.

Only when themselves older would those who were previously the children concerned - after later adequately having been catechized - be able for the first time themselves "freely" to gain admission to the Lord's Table (*viz.* as mature adults). For, in contrast to their parents, those who were previously the children concerned - when 'infants' or 'little ones' - had never themselves "forsaken the Lord's bread and cup, to hasten freely to a profane contact."

Not those children themselves, but only their hypocritical parents, had then acted as "murderers" - by then carrying those 'unfree' children away from the Church, while repudiating their very own baptismal vows which they had made as parents. But all this had happened before those 'spiritually murdered' children could themselves freely turn first to the Lord, and then to His Table (which latter they could do only at their own later maturity).

It must again be stressed that Cyprian is here not at all advocating Paedocommunion in the churches. Cyprian is here merely mentioning instances of the beginnings of an aberrant and abhorrent and then-novel and semi-paganistic (and probably also paedocommunionistic) syncretism which was then for the very first time being engaged in by certain backslidden Church Members. And, indeed, they there at first engaged in - precisely outside the Church.

The possible bearing of this on ecclesiastical Paedocommunionism (sic!) will become more apparent only in the 25th chapter of this Third Treatise (to be dealt with soon below). Indeed, that occurred during a time of then-recent and indeed great persecution - when a lapsing Church had struggled for its very existence also against the increasing inundations thereof of downright pagan practices such as paganistic Paedocommunionism.

#### 505. Augustine on these observations by Cyprian in the latter's Third Treatise

Let us now note how the later Augustine of Hippo-Regius - just 150 years later, in 408 A.D. 1498 - himself here understood his Fellow-African predecessor, the A.D. 250 Cyprian of nearby Carthage. Both of these men believed in being catechized before being admitted to the Eucharist.

By all canons of documentary interpretation, not just in terms of doctrinal similarity but also in terms of proximity in both space and time, Augustine's grasp of Cyprian's actions is obviously more accurate than that of modern Paedocommunionists. Indeed, most of the latter who here appeal to Augustine, badly misuse both Cyprian and Augustine largely in order to try to grind their own non-catechetical eucharistic axe.

Augustine says: "Persons of more advanced years...who attempt to place those who have been baptized [as infants] under obligations idolatrously to worship heathen gods, are guilty of spiritual homicide. True, they do not actually kill the children's souls; but they go as far towards 'killing' them as is in their power.... Blessed Cyprian wrote [about this] in his Letter Concerning the Lapsed..., rebuking those who in the time of persecution had sacrificed to idols."

Augustine here recalls how that Cyprian had said: 'And, so that nothing might be lacking to fill up the measure of their crime - their infant children, carried in arms, or led thither by the hands of their parents, lost, while yet in their infancy, that which they had received as soon as life began.' Augustine then gives the following explanatory comment on this citation from Cyprian:

"They 'lost' it - that is to say, in the purpose and wish of those who perpetrated on them such a wrong.... Had they actually in their own persons 'lost' it - they [the infants themselves, however,]

must have remained under the divine sentence of condemnation without any pleas." Mercifully, however, believed Augustine - and believed Cyprian (in Augustine's opinion) - this was not so.

Augustine explains that those infants did not thereby lose their salvation. Nor did Cyprian himself think so. Nor did Augustine later think that Cyprian might have thought so.

Insists Augustine: "If holy Cyprian had been of this opinion - he would not have added...: 'Shall not these [former infants] say, when the judgment day has come: 'We have done nothing [so wrong]. We have not of our own accord hastened to participate in profane rites.... The apostasy of others caused our destruction.

"'We found our parents [to be our] murderers. For they deprived us of our Mother the Church.... Through the wrong done by others, we were ensnared - because while yet young and unable to think for ourselves, we were by the deed of others...made partners in their sin.'"

By 'destruction' - of course - both Cyprian and Augustine here mean 'deprivation of current church fellowship.' They do not mean 'everlasting torment in hell' etc. That should become apparent also from our own next section immediately below.

#### 506. Cyprian and Augustine both rejected idolatrous Paedocommunion

Note, both Cyprian and Augustine here certainly agree and admit that the reprehensible action of the parents concerned indeed brought about the "destruction" of their own baptized infants' fellowship with and in the Church! For Cyprian and Augustine both have the children later saying that "they [our parents] deprived us of our Mother the Church" - until the infants themselves would grow up. Then, however, those grown-up ex-children could themselves turn back to the Church - when as adults (and indeed for the first time ever) they could gain admission to Christ's Table, after making their own personal 'Profession of Faith.'

Nowhere do either Cyprian or Augustine suggest that any of these infants postmortally went to hell. To the contrary, Augustine insists that Cyprian was instead demonstrating quite the opposite. For Cyprian had entered the plea that the infants themselves had been blameless - at the very time when their blameworthy apostate parents had themselves manducated at sacrifices offered to idols, and had then carried also their own infants-in-arms away from the fellowship of the Church.

Indeed, Cyprian would later go on to say with dismay - that adult Magistrates paganly and paedocommunionistically gave "bread mingled with wine" previously dedicated to an idol, even to a tiny little girl who was a Member of the Christian Church then being persecuted. Cyprian would also add that another adult, a wayward Deacon, shortly thereafter force-fed communion wine down that blamelessly and unwilling little girl's throat until she vomited it up again.

Explains Augustine about the first case of the covenant children removed from Christ's Church by their own apostate parents: "This plea, in their defence, he [Cyprian] would not have subjoined - had he not believed it to be perfectly just, and one which would be of service to these



infants at the bar of divine judgment.... Those shall not be doomed to perish, whose souls [not they themselves blamelessly but only] their parents did, so far at least as concerns their own guilt in the transaction, bring to ruin" - and, indeed, most blameworthy so.

Consequently, Infant-Baptism - already well established - did not, to Cyprian, imply a matching practice of Infant-Communion. Nor does Cyprian's second example anent the breadless innovative force-feeding of communion wine to a demon-oppressed little girl - presuppose or justify or even describe either Infant-Communion or Toddler-Communion or Child-Communion.

For just a few paragraphs later, Cyprian goes on to mention<sup>1499</sup> certain parents who, during the A.D. 249f Decian persecutions, carelessly entrusted their little girl to the care of a wet-nurse who surrendered the child to pagan Magistrates who in the presence of an idol gave her to eat bread mixed with wine which previously had been used in the immolation of those who had perished. Then, Cyprian further mentions the subsequent misguided attempt by a certain Deacon to force-feed communion wine (but not bread) into the little girl - in order to 'exorcise' demons he seems to have thought she ingested together with the food dedicated to idols which she had earlier been given to manducate.

Neither giving the little girl to eat of the wine-soaked bread previously dedicated to the idol, nor the later force-feeding her with communion wine, has anything at all to do with the right use of the Eucharist. It seems significant the little girl promptly vomited up the communion wine breadlessly force-fed to her. Thus, this obvious aberration should never be regarded as authorization for the Church to give infants or toddlers the Sacrament of Holy Communion!

Very significantly, Cyprian himself then calls that little girl's mouth "profane." This means unsanctified, and unfit to imbibe sanctified communion wine.

Then he goes right on to mention another case of a "woman...of more mature age [who] secretly crept in among us when we were sacrificing." She, says Cyprian, "received" not 'food' but a "'sword' for herself...as if taking some deadly poison."<sup>1500</sup>

Also John Calvin would write about such 'eucharistic' "poison" - and, indeed, specifically as regards the pernicious practice of Paedocommunion. He wrote against the Anabaptist heretics:<sup>1501</sup> "They object that there is not greater reason for admitting infants to Baptism than to the Lord's Supper - to which, however, they are never admitted. As if Scripture did not in every way draw a wide distinction between them....

"The Supper is intended for those of riper years who, having passed the tender period of infancy, are fit to bear solid food.... As far as regards Baptism, the Lord makes no selection of age. Whereas He does not admit all to partake of the Supper - but confines it to those who are fit to discern the body and blood of the Lord.... Why should we stretch out poison to our young children?!... The Passover, for which the Supper is substituted, ...was duly eaten only by those who were of an age sufficient to ask the meaning of it (Exodus 12:26)."

507. Paedocommunionist Leithart's lacklustre analysis of Cyprian's De lapsis 9 & 25

We have just seen that Cyprian's Third Treatise (titled *De lapsis* alias *On the Lapsed*) deals with two very different situations at its chapters 9 and 25. At its chapter 9, it says nothing whatsoever about either infants or toddlers or children eucharizing - but speaks of apostate parents who (unlike their children) had themselves forsaken the Lord's bread and cup and also carried their tiny ones in their own parental arms away from the Church into which the latter had formerly been engrafted apparently by Infant-Baptism "in the very beginning of their nativity." At its chapter 25, however, the Treatise describes how Pagan Magistrates gave a little girl bread mingled with wine previously dedicated to an idol - and how that child soon thereafter vomited after a wayward Deacon breadlessly force-fed her with communion wine during a Eucharistic Service.

Lacklustre Leithart paedocommunionistically pontificates about this very subjectivistically: 1502 "Cyprian stated unequivocally that children took part in the Supper (*De lapsis*, 9.25), and this practice continues still today." In fact, however, most of the statements in this single sentence of Leithart's, are quite incorrect!

Leithart alleges: "Cyprian stated unequivocally that children took part in the Supper (*De lapsis*, 9..." etc. Here, Leithart is woefully wrong. Quite the contrary!

Cyprian at *De lapsis* 9 stated neither equivocally nor unequivocally that children took part in the Supper. Cyprian there stated that children were carried away from the Church by their apostate parents.

Leithart further alleges: "Cyprian stated unequivocally that children took part in the Supper (*De lapsis*, ...25)" etc. To the contrary! Cyprian at *De lapsis* 25 mentions no children [plural] at all, and still less that any such took part in the Supper. Cyprian there states only that one little girl ate a mixture of bread and wine dedicated to an idol, and that she alone was later breadlessly force-fed with communion wine (of which action we would like to believe even Leithart disapproves).

Leithart further alleges Cyprian says all this in the latter's *De lapsis* at "9.25" [sic] - as if the 9th chapter of Cyprian's *De lapsis* consisted of at least 25 verses, and as if Leithart were here referring to a 25th verse in Cyprian's 9th chapter. In actual fact, however, that entire 9th chapter consists in toto of but five sentences - none of which refers to Paedocommunion.

The relevant passages in that treatise to which the lacklustre Leithart is here purporting to refer, are in fact chapters 9 and 25. Chapter 9, however, contains no reference whatsoever to Paedocommunion (whether Pagan or Christian or Syncretistic).

Chapter 25 refers to one case of Pagan Paedocommunion by Heathen Magistrates, and to another case where a wayward Deacon tried to force-feed a resisting child with eucharistic wine. Indeed, chapters 25 & 26 together show Cyprian disapproving of: (1) breadlessly force-feeding communion wine to an infant "with resisting lips" who then promptly vomited it up again; (2) a mature female unbeliever illicitly consuming the communion elements and ending up being mortally poisoned thereby; (3) an "unworthy" woman burned by fire when she touched the communion bread; and (4) a "defiled" man who "dared with the rest to receive secretly a part of the sacrifice celebrated by the Presbyters" but who ended up holding in his hands not the holy bread but

a cinder.

With such sloppy scholarship, one must indeed wonder whether Paedocommunionist Leithart himself has ever seriously studied Cyprian at all. Sadly, as we shall show below, the same must be said too: of the Classic Pro-Paedocommunionists and Anti-Puritan Anglicans Jeremy Taylor and Joseph Bingham; and of the modern Paedocommunionists Chris Keidel, R.J. Rushdoony, and Tommy Lee.

#### 508. Pro-Paedocommunionist Taylor misreads Cyprian pro-paedocommunionistically

Though the 1660 Anglo-Catholic Anti-Puritan Jeremy Taylor correctly concedes that there was no evidence of Paedocommunion whatsoever before Cyprian, he wrongly concludes that the A.D. 250 Cyprian himself approved of that practice so foreign to the Holy Bible and to the Early Church Fathers. Yet in all honesty, even Taylor only claimed: "From some[!] of the earliest ages of the Church down to the time of [the mediaeval emperor] Charles the Great [who died in A.D. 814], that is for above six hundred years, the Church of God did give the Holy Communion to newly-baptized infants. Indeed, the pro-paedocommunionistic Taylor here admits by default that even he could find no evidence whatsoever in favour of Church Paedocommunionism before A.D. 250.

Yet Taylor asserts as 'proof' (sic) of third-century Christian Paedocommunion, that the A.D. 250 "St. Cyprian [De Lapsis] recounts a miracle of an infant into whose mouth (when the parents had ignorantly and carelessly left the babe) the gentile priests had forced some of their idol sacrifice. But when the Minister of the Church came to pour into the mouth [of the unweaned infant, the wine from] the chalice of the Lord, it resisted - being overpowered; grew sick; and fell into convulsion. By which narrative the practice of the Church of that age is sufficiently declared." 1503

Here, Taylor is wrong in at least eight of his claims. First, Taylor claims the above occurrence was a miracle; but the eye-witness Cyprian who recorded the occurrence, claimed no such miracle. Second, Taylor claims it was "the gentile priests" who forced some of their sacrifice into the mouth of an infant; but Cyprian said that it was "the Magistrates" alias pagan politicians who gave the infant such food. Third, Taylor claims gentile priests "forced" some of their sacrifice into the mouth of an infant; but Cyprian said the magistrates merely "gave" that food to that infant. Fourth, Taylor claims "the Minister of the Church" came to pour into the mouth [of the unweaned infant, the wine from] the chalice of the Lord; but Cyprian says it was a Deacon who did this.

Fifth, Taylor claims the man "came to pour into the mouth" of the unweaned infant "the wine [from] the chalice"; but Cyprian said the man "forced upon her some of the Sacrament of the cup." Sixth, Taylor claims the infant was then "overpowered" [by a demon?!]; but Cyprian says "the little child by the instinct of the Divine Majesty turned away its face, compressed its mouth with resisting lips, and refused the cup."

Seventh, Taylor claims that after the man imparted the wine to the child, she "grew sick and fell into convulsion"; but Cyprian said the child then rather started "sobbing and vomiting." And

eighth, Taylor claims that by this "narrative the practice of the Church of that age is sufficiently declared"; while Cyprian instead described that singular occurrence which he himself eye-witnessed, as "profane."

We must indeed ask exactly what the practice of that age was which, in the 1660 Taylor's own words, was "thereby sufficiently declared"? Very clearly, not at all the Church's practice of Paedocommunion - but rather the innovation of a semi-repaganized Deacon around A.D. 250, in a time of great syncretism pursuant to the Decian persecution of Christians!

What is Taylor's exact claim here? It is this. He avers that by this "narrative the practice of the Church of that age is sufficiently declared" to have been paedocommunionistic.

Nonsense! This is far rather Taylor's miserable misuse of this "narrative." Indeed, therefrom some justification would later widely be sought for the different "practice" of Anglo-Catholic Paedocommunionists. Truly, the Anti-Puritan Taylor is here indeed scraping the very bottom of the barrel of paganistic syncretism!

Indeed, the sacramentalistic Jeremy Taylor himself then goes yet further - as follows. "Of the matter of fact there is no question.... The Primitive Church did believe it [viz. Paedocommunion to be] necessary to the salvation of infants."

Really? - we must respond. Who in "the Primitive Church" ever taught that Paedocommunion was "necessary to the salvation of infants"?

Who in "the Primitive Church" even taught Paedocommunion was even mildly desirable simply for an infant's welfare? And even more importantly - whoever in the Primitive Church could have taught Paedocommunion was necessary - to the salvation of infants? Name, address, date, and telephone number - Mr. Taylor! Truly, Taylor's silence remains deafening.

From the time of Cyprian, the Anglo-Catholic Jeremy Taylor then leaps forward another 150 years, to the A.D. 400 St. Augustine. Here Taylor claims that "Austin believed that this doctrine and practice descended from the Apostles...."

"He [Augustine according to Taylor] infers the following conclusion: 'It is in vain to promise salvation and life eternal to little children - unless they be baptized, and received the body and blood of Christ'.... Alcuin [who died a further four centuries later in A.D. 804] recites a canon expressly charging that as soon as ever the infants are baptized, they should receive the Holy Communion before they suck or receive any other nourishment.'

Ignoring Augustine's own requirement of catechization before eucharizing, Taylor here defends a ninth-century superstition held even then by only some. This was the sad superstition which, in a by-then badly-deformed Church, required the baptizing and the eucharizing of infants right after their birth - even before the latter first fed from their mothers' breasts.

But such was and is a superstition foreign to the Church in Biblical times and in Early-Patristic times. Indeed, it is foreign even to Mid-Patristic times.

Yet even the pro-paedocommunionizing Anti-Puritan Sacramentalist Jeremy Taylor has the honesty next to tell us that "since the time of Charles the Great [who died in A.D. 814] - that is, for above eight hundred years [till Taylor's own 1660 at the time of his Anglo-Catholic Restoration] - this practice hath been omitted in the Western Churches generally.... In the Council of Trent, it was condemned as unfit....

"The Church of Rome [less deformed than the Eastern-'Orthodox'], and some few others [viz. all Protestants], are...condemners of this ancient and catholic practice" - says Taylor. Yes, and rightly so. For 'ancient' and even 'catholic' practices - need to be condemned whenever not also apostolic!

To Taylor, however: "It is absolutely necessary to communicate." Thus, to Taylor, apparently - there is no salvation, without eucharizing!

The practice of the Oriental alias the Eastern-'Orthodox' Churches - and the theory of orientalizing and sacramentalizing 'high and hazy' Anglicans like Taylor - is far worse than that of Romanism. For even the latter at least rightly insists on catechizing post-toddlers before their first eucharization (albeit at still too young an age).

To Taylor in theory and to the Oriental Churches in practice, however, there was and is no such catechetical safeguard. For to them, Infant Communion is a sine qua non!

Yet, inconsistently, Taylor does admit that "infants indeed cannot discern the Lord's body." Re Paedocommunion, he also admits: there is "no command for it" in Scripture; that "the words of our blessed Lord recited by S. John [6:53]...were spoken before the institution of both the Sacraments"; that "it is in the power of the Church to give it or to deny it"; that "infants...can have upon them no necessity to be communicated"; that "we nor the churches of God have no such custom" (First Corinthians 11:16); "that it is not necessary"; and that "in this case the present [anti-paedocommunionistic] practice of the Church is to be our rule and measure of peace and determination of the article."

Thus the Anglican Taylor was not just 'high and hazy.' Like many other Anglicans, he was also 'broad and crazy.' And highly and hazily incongruous!

Frankly, re Paedocommunionism, the pro-paedocommunionistic Taylor in his Works lacks the courage of his convictions (if any). He also lacks consistency. For, having averred that (allegedly communicatable) infants lack reason - he goes on to add: "Concerning madmen, the case is otherwise.... They are like dead men.... Until they be restored to reason, they cannot be restored to grace, and therefore [are] not admitted to the Sacrament."

"Concerning Madmen" - ?! Yes, also Jeremy Taylor, as regards the permissibility of Paedocommunion, might himself be viewed as both 'broad and crazy.' And, in addition, both 'high and hazy' and 'daft and dazy.'

Very clearly, this kind of sacramentalistic Anglicanism - like Eastern-'Orthodoxy' itself - has

no future. The centuries ahead belong either to Romanism - or to the yet even far more consistent Calvinism.

509. Pro-Paedocommunionist Bingham misreads Cyprian pro-paedocommunionistically

Taylor died in 1667. He was, however, not the only Anti-Puritanical Anglican who advocated Paedocommunionism. Also the later ecumenical Anglican Sacramentalist Joseph Bingham (1668 to 1723) - who was expelled from Oxford's University College for the heresy of confusing the terms "Person" and "Substance" concerning the Godhead in 1695 - was sadly confused too about the history of the Eucharist.

On the one hand, he rightly teaches that there was to be no eucharizing ere catechization. Thus too (even according to Mr. Bingham): Tertullian, Cyprian, Eusebius, the Council of Elibert, the Council of Nicea, the Apostolic Constitutions, the Apostolic Canons, Cyril, Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustine, Theodoret, Innocent, and Justinian (etc.).<sup>1504</sup> Yet on the other hand, Bingham inconsistently yet warmly advocates eucharizing also uncatechizable infants.

In his *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Bingham very wrongly pontificates:<sup>1505</sup> "We may observe that children were made partakers of the Eucharist (which Cyprian calls the meat and drink of the Lord)... It is beyond dispute that as she [viz. the Post-Apostolic Church] baptized infants, so she immediately admitted them to a participation of the Eucharist as soon as they were baptized and ever after without exception."

"Beyond dispute"?! To attempt to prove this sweeping statement and highly-disputable claim, Mr. Bingham proceeds to adduce "some evidence...out of Gennadius [A.D. 495] and Alcuin [804] and the *Ordo Romanus* ['composed in the ninth century'] - and also [the theological lightweight and obscure] *Jesse Ambianensis*...where orders are also given to communicate infants as soon as they were baptized."

Alleges Bingham: "Here I will add the testimony of the more ancient [yet nevertheless still Post-Cyprianic A.D. 250f] writers - [so] that it [viz. Paedocommunion] may not be thought a novelty and invention of latter ages. Cyprian often [?] mentions it as the common [?] practice"!

"Often" [!], wrote Bingham. What? - we respond. "Often"? No! Just one solitary reference by Bingham, to just one solitary writing of Cyprian - namely in his "De Lapsis" (where Cyprian apparently disapproved of that novel innovation from Paganism).

But that one solitary mention by Cyprian, as we have already seen, does not at all claim what Bingham alleges it teaches. Nor, for that matter, does it claim what any other Paedocommunionist wrongly alleges it teaches.

Another glaring example of the Pro-Paedocommunionist Bingham's abuse of Cyprian, was and is the former's misuse of Cyprian's Epistle 72 to Stephen. Bingham misuses that letter - in trying to show that even in Cyprian's own time, "the custom of giving the Eucharist to infants for many ages" was already in vogue in the Christian Church.

Argues Bingham:1506 "It was not sufficient for men to be regenerated only by imposition of hands [at Confirmation]. But they ought to be born again by both the Sacraments in the Catholic Church - that is, as well by washing in water [in Baptism] as imposition of hands [in Confirmation unto admission to the Eucharist].... Cyprian himself says both the Sacraments of regeneration were required to complete men's sanctification."

Observe here how Mr. Bingham misapplies what Cyprian here said about the admission of heretical men to the Church catholic by way of a schismatic cyprianic 'rebaptism' - to Bingham's own view of the Non-Cyprianic and heretical admission of infants to the Lord's Table! For Cyprian's actual words in his Epistle 72 have nothing at all to do with Infant-Communion or even Child-Communion. Instead - they simply assert how Cyprian and the whole of his Council had [proto-donatistically and wrongly] decreed that those who might return from heresy into the Church catholic should all be [re-]baptized; and that Overseers coming over from the heretics, would thenceforth need to communicate as Laymen.

Said Cyprian:1507 "Those who have been dipped abroad outside the Church [catholic] and have been stained among heretics and schismatics with the taint of profane water - when they come to us and to the Church which is one, ought to be baptized.... For [only] then, finally, can they fully be sanctified and be the sons of God, if they be born of each Sacrament....

"Traitors and rebels against the Church [catholic]...who have been promoted among the heretics by a profane ordination by the hands of false-overseers....[are to] be received when they return - on this condition, that they communicate as Laymen." Thus Bingham.

Truly, Bingham (and the modern 'Protestant' Neo-Paedocommunionists who rely on him as their 'authority'), are wrong to apply this remedy against heretics and schismatics, as if it proved a 'Cyprianic Paedocommunion' in the Mainline Church catholic. For Cyprian does not even mention Paedocommunionism!

#### 510. Bingham's views of the Post-Cyprianic Church Fathers refute Paedocommunion

Other (Post-Cyprianic) writings are next appealed to by Mr. Bingham. Let us briefly examine such questionable appeals.

Bingham appeals to the A.D. 325f Apostolic Constitutions, which he says "bids mothers bring their children with them" to the Lord's Table. But it does not say any of the latter then manducated there!

Bingham appeals to "Austin." By this, Bingham means Augustine of Hippo-Regius, who died in A.D. 430. Yet Bingham neglects to add that Augustine, though sacramentalistically over-reacting against the sub-sacramental theology of Pelagius, nevertheless himself always insisted on catechizing before eucharizing.

Bingham appeals to "Dionysius." By this, he apparently means Pseudo-Dionysius the A.D.

500 Pseudo-Areopagite. This semi-apocryphal writing dates from the beginning of a time of deformation, fully half a millennium after the birth of Christ!

And Bingham appeals also to a whole bevy<sup>1508</sup> of Eastern-Orthodox sources. Such range from Evagrius of Syria (who died around A.D. 600) to the monophysitic Church in Ethiopia of Bingham's own day (A.D. 1708).

The latter, explains British Scholar Dr. Douglas (in his *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*), is "a Church overlaid by superstition and syncretism."<sup>1509</sup> That, as far as the theologians and writings are concerned whom or which Bingham previously mentioned above - can be said also of Pseudo-Dionysius and Evagrius.

Having built up his above-mentioned flimsy case for Paedocommunion, Mr. Bingham himself elsewhere thoroughly demolishes it - by proving historically that there has never been admission to the Lord's Table without prior catechization. This point is so important and so decisive, that we shall here quote Bingham on it at some considerable length.

#### 511. Bingham on the Church Fathers' insistence on catechization before Communion

Now according to Bingham,<sup>1510</sup> manducation at the Eucharist was only for "the Pistoï or 'perfect' Christians" who had professed their faith. Not so the "Catechumens, from the Greek words *katecheoo* and *katecheesis*....

"They had also the names of *Novitioli* and *Tyrones Dei*, new soldiers of God - as we find in Tertullian (*de Penitentia* 6) and St. Austin (*de Fide ad Catechumen* II:1). Because they were just entering upon that state which made them soldiers of God.... They are sometimes also called *Audientes*, Hearers, from their instruction....

"This," states Bingham, "must be the meaning of that passage in Eusebius (*de Vitae Constantini* IV:61). There, speaking of Constantine's prayers in the church..., he says it was the same church where he had first been admitted to imposition of hands and prayer; that is, had [first] been made a Catechumen with those ceremonies....

"As for the children of believing parents, it is certain that as they were baptized in infancy - so they were admitted Catechumens, as soon as they were capable of learning.... The [A.D. 305] Council of Eliberis (ch. 42) appointed two years' trial for new converts.... [The A.D. 483-565] Justinian, in one of his Novels (144), appointed the same term.... A longer time was generally thought necessary to discipl[in]e and train men up gradually....

"There were different orders or degrees of Catechumens in all such churches as kept to the term of catechising for two or three years" - viz., "the *Ateleiooteroi* and the *Teleiooteroi*, the Imperfect and the Perfect, the Beginners and the Proficients.... First [were] the *Exothoumenoi* or Catechumens, instructed privately without [alias outside of] the Church. Such an order or degree of Catechumens as this, is evidently deduced from one of the canons of the Council of Neocaesarea (chapter 5)....



"The next degree above these, were the Hearers; which the Greeks call Akroomenoi and the Latins Audientes. Who were so called from their being admitted to hear sermons and the Scriptures read in the Church. But they were not allowed to stay [for the Lord's Supper]....

"Hence arose a third sort of Catechumens.... They for three years shall be Hearers only (Council of Nicea, canon 14)....

"Above these was a fourth order...the Greeks call...Phootizomenoi - and the Latins, Competentes (Cyril Catechetical Lectures 1 & 2 etc.).... When their names were thus registered, then followed a scrutiny or examination of their proficiency [in Christian Knowledge] under the preceding stages of the catechetical exercises....

"They that were approved upon such examination, were sometimes called Electi.... Because they were now accepted and chosen as persons qualified....

"St. Austin (in his On Psalm 65 and in his Faith and Works ch. 6) more than once speaks of it as the common practice of the African Church - joining examination, catechising and exorcism together.... We learn the same from Cyprian and the Council of Carthage held under him....

"There, it is often said that the heretics and schismatics were first to be exorcised with imposition of hands...before they could be admitted as true members of the Catholic Church.... Nazianze, in his Oration on Baptism (40), thus bespeaks his Catechumen: 'Do not...grow weary of the length or continuance of it! For it is a proper trial of a man's sincerity'....

"The Competentes were taught the words of the [Apostles'] Creed, which they were obliged to get by heart in order to repeat it before the Bishop [alias the Overseer] at their last examination.... St. Ambrose...distinguishes the Competentes from the other Catechumens.... When they had learned the Creed, they were also taught the Lord's Prayer....

"The same is evident from Chrysostom, Austin and Theodoret [A.D. 400-450]. Of whom I shall have occasion to speak...in chapter V section 9, where I treat of the ancient discipline in concealing the Sacred Mysteries from the Catechumens....

"There is another mistake which runs through the writings of many modern authors.... They suppose that though the Catechumens were not allowed to participate in the Eucharist, yet they had something like it which they call Eulogiae.... Baronius [1538f] was the first that maintained this opinion....

"But the opinion is wholly grounded upon a mistaken passage in St. Austin.... He does not say that it was consecrated bread.... His words [De Peccatoris Meritis II:26] are these: 'That which the Catechumens receive, though it be not the body of Christ, is yet a holy thing'.... That this...was not the consecrated bread but only a little taste of salt, we may learn from the same St. Austin [Confessions I:11]."

Nevertheless, "children were made partakers of the Eucharist (which Cyprian calls the meat

and drink of the Lord)" - avers Bingham, very misleadingly. Yet, even while claiming that the Eucharist was given to infants for many ages - Bingham also states that the Early Church, "as she baptized infants [in infancy] and gave them the unction of chrism with the imposition of hands for Confirmation [whensoever], so she...admitted them to a participation of the Eucharist.... Let all men know that in the common course of things - Confirmation always preceded the Eucharist.... The usual way, was to let Confirmation usher in the Communion."1511 Emphases mine - F.N. Lee.

Indeed, Bingham adds1512 that even as late as the fourth century, "the first part of their worship [was] in the Missa Catechumenorum" or 'Service of the Catechumens' "before the latter were dismissed [missa est] immediately before the commencement of the eucharistic part of the Worship Service." In fact, Bingham also admits that Chrysostom himself (in his 52nd Easter Homily) "says plainly that children were not called upon to join in the prayers for the Energumens and Penitents (which were of the same sort with these for the Catechumens)....

"Now, by having fixed these prayers in its proper place, we may interpret all other passages in the ancient writers which speak of praying over the Catechumens or praying with them. As that of the Council of Nice [alias Nicea in A.D. 325 at its canon 14] - which orders that if any of those who were Catechumens properly so called...became Lapsers, then they should for three years be thrust down to the rank of Hearers only, and after that be admitted to pray with the Catechumens again.... As soon as the Deacon had dismissed the Catechumens with the usual form: 'Catechumens, depart in peace' - he said again: 'Pray, you Energumens!'"1513

Here are the inconsistent Pro-Paedocommunionist Mr. Joseph Bingham's very own words:1514 "Chrysostom...says...Energumens were not allowed to stay to hear the prayers of consecration with the Faithful, but were dismissed with the Catechumens and other Non-Communicants before the Communion Service began.... The Ancients never allowed Non-Communicants to stay and worship [or solemnly reverence] the Eucharist." All emphases mine - F.N. Lee.

Mr. Bingham further grants that in the [A.D. 325f] Apostolic Constitutions "the Deacon is appointed again to make a solemn proclamation ordering all Non-Communicants, Catechumens, Penitents and Unbelievers to be excluded." Indeed, he concedes that also in the A.D. 400 "Chrysostom's works [Ap Chrys. VI Hom. 37 de Filio Prodigio and First Homily Against the Jews]" - the latter reported that also Overseer Severianus of Gabala stated: "You have seen the Deacons traversing the Church and crying out: 'Let no Catechumen be present...[to] see the heavenly blood shed!'"1515

Bingham concedes further1516 that "as soon as the service of the Catechumens was ended, a Deacon was used to call upon all Catechumens and those that were under penance, to withdraw; and [to] admonish all others to stay...and receive the Communion.... Penitents...were admitted to hear the prayers, but not to make their oblation nor receive the Communion. Whence they had the name of Consistentes, Co-Standers - because they might stay to...the prayers, but still...without the oblation....

"St. Chrysostom inveighs [in his Homily 3 on Ephesians]...: 'Are you unfit [or unworthy] of

the sacrifice, and unfit to partake of it?... If you are of the number of Penitents - you may not partake! For he who is not a Partaker, is a Penitent.... None of those who are not initiated, ought to be present. So neither any of those who are initiated, if they be defiled'.... Persons [present] were obliged to receive the Communion...except Catechumens and Excommunicates.... Schismatics were commonly ranked in the same class with excommunicate persons....

"Sometimes they were allowed with all others to hear the [Holy] Scriptures read and the sermon preached.... But then, when the Service of the Catechumens was over, they were obliged to depart with them....

"Let no Catechumen, no Penitent, no Unbeliever, no Heretic or Heterodox be present at the Holy Mysteries!'.... They were of the number of those to whom the Church refused to give the Sacrament, as persons not being in full communion with her." Binghamus locutus, causa finita!

#### 512. Bingham's opposition to Infant Communion and his insistence on knowledgeableness

In all honesty, Bingham then opposed the Paedocommunionism of the Eastern-Orthodox Church. Even he then declared:1517

"There are good reasons to persuade the contrary: 1. Because it has no firm foundation in the Word of God. 2. Because infants which are baptized are in effect thereby partakers of the body and blood of Christ which are exhibited spiritually in Baptism as well as the Eucharist, according to St. Austin himself and all the Ancient Fathers.... 3. Because infants cannot do this in remembrance of Christ which He requires.... 4. Because there is the same analogy and agreement between the Paschal Lamb and the Lord's Supper as there is between Circumcision and Baptism - an infant Israelite had a right to enter the Covenant by Circumcision, as it was the seal of it; but he was not to partake of the Passover till he could ask...the meaning of the Mystery, Exodus 12:26. So an infant may enter the Christian Covenant by Baptism - but not partake regularly of the Eucharist till he can do it in remembrance of Christ" [First Corinthians 11:23f].

In brief summary, then. Says Bingham: "The canons and rules of the Church seem to drive away the Energumens together with the Catechumens and Penitents" - viz., from attendance and manducation at the Eucharist.

As regards "what preparation the Ancients required as necessary in Communicants to qualify them for a worthy reception," Bingham makes an important declaration. He says:1518 "The preparation which they required as necessary in every Christian, was the performance of the conditions and obligations which every man laid upon himself in Baptism....

"The obligation...was the profession and actual performance of these three things: 1. Repentance or a renunciation of all former sin together with the author of it, the devil. 2. Faith or belief in the several articles of the Christian institution or mystery of godliness. 3. A holy and constant obedience paid to the laws of this holy religion."

Very clearly indeed, then, no infants and toddlers can do all of these three things. Thus the

pro-paedocommunicistic Bingham ends up refuting himself!

Bingham then closes 1519 by agreeing with Chrysostom and even with Jeremy Taylor that the following pre-conditions are necessary in order "to make a due preparation for the Communion....  
1. Faith. 2. Repentance and obedience. 3. Justice. 4. Peace and unity. 5. Charity and beneficence. 6. Pardoning of offences. 7. Lastly, men's behaviour at the time of communicating and afterwards, which I shall chiefly represent in the words of St. Chrysostom who has spoken so largely upon this subject....

"With respect to faith, they required in every Communicant that was of years of discretion not only an orthodox profession of the several articles of the Christian Faith in general but also a particular faith with relation to the mystical eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament. The former is evident from that usual form of words in the Deacon's admonition to all that had not a right to communicate, to withdraw.... St. Austin [alias Augustine] is very copious in setting forth this necessary doctrine of spiritual manducation by faith."

There are contradictions and weaknesses in Bingham's views of the history of who manducates at the Eucharist. But the triumphalistic way in which modern Paedocommunionists appeal to him as their authority, betrays only the abysmal ignorance of those modern Paedocommunionists as to the totality of what Bingham taught on the subject - or alternatively betrays their highly-selective use of but some materials and therefore their dishonest suppression of other materials Bingham emphasized which are quite inimical to their own novel paedocommunionistic fads.

### 513. Rousas J. Rushdoony misinterprets Bingham on Cyprian's Treatise III

This Anti-Puritan 1660f Restoration's High-Anglican Church Historian Joseph Bingham is the hero of modern Quasi-Calvinistic Paedocommunionists. In his 1973 Institutes of Biblical Law, 1520 Neo-Armenian Paedocommunionist Rev. Rousas John Rushdoony pontificates:

"In the Early Church, children partook of the Sacrament.... Joseph Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church cites the evidence of a long-standing practice of participation by children and infants.

"This practice was clearly a carry-over from the Passover of Israel.... Arguments against this inclusion of children are more rationalistic and Pelagian than Biblical....

"The evidence is clear 'that the Communion itself was given to infants - and that, immediately from the time of their Baptism.' As Bingham noted, this fact 'is frequently mentioned in Cyprian, Austin, Innocentius and Gennadius, writers from the third to the fifth century. Joseph Bingham, 1521 The Antiquities of the Christian Church.... No Biblical reason can be given for eliminating children from the Sacrament.'" Unquote R.J. Rushdoony. His first two sentences here, are incorrect.

Also in his 1994 Systematic Theology, Rushdoony blunders further. There too, he again

refers with approval to only some of the (paedo)communionistic views of Bingham.1522

In light of our previous discussion of both Cyprian and Bingham, Rushdoony's comments above hardly need refutation. Any unbiased reading of the totality of Cyprian and Bingham, rather evidences exactly the opposite of what Rushdoony here alleges.

Amusing indeed is Rushdoony's implying that Bingham saw infant communion as "clearly a carry-over from the Passover of Israel." The truth, however, as we have seen above, is that even Bingham clearly stated that "an infant Israelite...was not to partake of the Passover till he could ask...the meaning of the Mystery, Exodus 12:26." How now, R.J. Rushdoony?!

Sadly, Rushdoony was not here being propelled by loyalty to Calvin's Calvinism - nor by a good grasp of the History of Doctrine in the Ancient Fathers. Here, he was instead fiercely and irrationally loyal rather to the pro-paedocommunionism of his immediate ancestors in the modern Eastern-Orthodoxistic Church of Armenia.

514. Also Mr. Tommy Lee misinterprets Bingham on Cyprian's Treatise III

Indeed, also the recent Paedocommunionist Tommy Lee miscites Bingham with approval. He writes: "Joseph Bingham...plainly states the terms by which the Ancient Church decided who would and who would not be invited to the Lord's Table when he wrote...: 'It is beyond dispute that as she baptized infants...she immediately admitted them to a participation of the Eucharist as soon as they were baptized'.... Joseph Bingham, Antiquities of the Christian Church, 10 vols. (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1856), 2:797.... In Cyprian's time it is undeniably[?!] a matter of course for all of the Church, including the infants and young children, to participate in the Lord's Supper."1523

Once again, also the Paedocommunionist Tommy Lee is far too propandandistic in his claims. It is just not true, as Tommy Lee pre-emptively claims: that "Joseph Bingham...plainly states"; or that "it is beyond dispute" that as the Early Church "baptized infants...she immediately admitted them to a participation of the Eucharist as soon as they were baptized"; or that "in Cyprian's time it is undeniably a matter of course for all of the Church, including the infants and young children, to participate in the Lord's Supper."

All of the above claims by Tommy Lee are not, as he misalleges, "plainly" stated. Not even Bingham taught, as Tommy Lee insists, that the Early Church "immediately" admitted baptized infants "to a participation of the Eucharist."

Nor is it true that "it is undeniably" a matter of course that "all of the Church including the infants and young children" did "participate in the Lord's Supper." Yet what is plainly to be seen, is that Tommy Lee's understanding even of Bingham on this point is no greater than the commitment to Calvin's Calvinism of either Joseph Bingham or Rousas J. Rushdoony.

We have seen above that Joseph Bingham is not at all a reliable guide anent the Early-Patristic Antipaedocommunionism of either the Ante-Nicene or the Post-Nicene Church. The same must be said even more emphatically of both R.J. Rushdoony and Tommy Lee. For they have here swallowed some of the more tentative communion-misperceptions of the Anti-Puritan Bingham -

hook, line and sinker.

515. Paedocommunionist Keidel cites Cyprian's Treatise III:25 alone

It is further interesting to note that also that other modern Paedocommunionist Chris Keidel indeed cites only from the twenty-fifth chapter of Cyprian's above-mentioned famous ancient treatise Concerning the Lapsed. Keidel does so, in his 1975 article *Is the Lord's Supper for Children?* He does so desperately, in support of his own Quasi-Protestant doctrine of 'Infant-Communion.'

In that article,<sup>1524</sup> Keidel there answers his own rhetorical question - "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?" Resoundingly, Keidel answers: Yes!

However, while indeed boldly citing from chapter twenty-five, Keidel does not bother even as much as to note anything at all from the first nine chapters of Cyprian's very same treatise Concerning the Lapsed. Yet chapter nine, as we have already seen,<sup>1425</sup> is not dealing with any kind of Christian 'Infant-Communion' or Christian 'Toddler-Communion' at all - nor even with any kind of adult 'Christian Communion' even for post-infantile or post-toddler Christians. Instead, it is dealing with the adult imbibing of "the deadly cup" dedicated to idols - and just possibly (but if so only implicitly) also with the force-fed 'infant ingesting' of such 'wicked wine' (as distinct from breadlessly force-feeding a demon-oppressed little girl with communion wine as later described in chapter twenty-five of the same Treatise).

For chapter nine of that Treatise does not explicitly state that either apostate parents nor eccentric ecclesiastics force-fed any infants with food dedicated to idols. Still less does it remotely suggest that either apostate parents or eccentric ecclesiastics there force-fed the Holy Communion to such infants or children.

It merely states that apostate parents - who themselves imbibed the 'wicked wine' of "the deadly cup" dedicated to idols - thus and then "carried or conducted" their very own children away from the Church. Indeed, it says that such parents thereby removed their children from the binding obligations which, "at the very first beginning of their nativity, they had gained" - namely, when they themselves had properly received Christian Baptism in tenderest infancy.

Similarly, chapters 15 and 16 of this same Third Treatise of Cyprian advocate anything but an 'Open Table' also for sucklings and toddlers. Cyprian there opposes all such laxity. Moreover, also in chapters 33 & 34, he sternly rebukes all those who give Communion also to Non-Communicants. Which leaves us only with the Pagan and Syncretistic Paedocommunionism (sic) briefly mentioned in chapter twenty-five as regards one and the same neglected little girl.

Chapter twenty-five of this Third Treatise of Cyprian, however, needs to be read and evaluated in the light of the prior statements in chapter nine and in light of the subsequent statements in chapters fifteen & sixteen and thirty-three & thirty-four thereof.<sup>1526</sup> Yet even this Third Treatise (as such) - is the only one of Cyprian's many writings to which Keidel's article ever refers!<sup>1527</sup>

Furthermore, Mr. Keidel also overlooks the fact that even in that chapter twenty-five - Cyprian not at all commends but instead discourages the then still-incipient and superstitious practice of breadlessly force-feeding communion wine to an infant in a backslidden and confused Christian assembly (if one may call it that). For this practice, a long-established pagan phenomenon - was only then just beginning to infiltrate perhaps just only one single congregation of Christians.

#### 516. What Cyprian's Treatise III:25 really teaches

The whole broader context of Cyprian's Treatise III:25 - namely III:24-26 - militates against Paedocommunionism. For note there its key words: 'denied Christ'; 'punishment'; 'crime' (repeatedly); 'misfortunes'; 'unclean'; 'impiously'; 'the wicked food'; 'madness'; 'tortured'; 'expired'; 'little careful'; 'forsaken child'; 'impatient'; 'tossed about like a wave of the sea'; 'violent excitement'; 'turned away its face'; 'compressed its mouth with resisting lips'; 'refused the cup'; 'forced on her some of the sacrament of the cup' (but not of the bread); 'sobbing and vomiting'; 'profane body and mouth'; 'polluted stomach'; 'secrets of darkness'; 'received not food but a sword for herself'; 'as if taking some deadly poison' (cf. Calvin's Institutes IV:16:30); 'frenzy'; 'misery'; 'dissimulated conscience'; 'unworthy' (cf. First Corinthians 11:29); 'defiled'; 'dared with the rest to receive'; 'unclean spirits'; 'unsoundness of mind and idiocy'; 'raging of madness'; 'manifold lapses'; 'multitude of sinners'; and 'wrath of God' (cf. First Corinthians 11:32).

Observe now how Cyprian himself, as an eye-witness, describes this novel and pernicious development. He writes:1528 "Learn what occurred when I myself was present and a witness! Some parents who...were escaping [from pagan persecution of Christianity]..., careless because they were then terrified, had left a little daughter under the care of a nurse. The nurse handed over the forsaken child to the [Pagan] Magistrates.

"They, in the presence of an idol to which people flocked, gave the child bread mingled with wine" - which (see below) had previously been dedicated to an idol. The pagan Magistrates gave the girl this mixture, "because the child was not yet able to eat meat, on account of its years."

Now this bread-and-wine mixture was given to the child by the Pagan Magistrates, Cyprian here informs us. He says it "was itself the remainder of what had been used in the immolation" - alias the sacrificial food-gift. Such had previously been dedicated to that pagan idol - or, prior to that, used perhaps even at a Christian Eucharist Service (or both successively).

The little girl did not herself seek out that food. It was given to her by adults [as in all of the Eastern-'Orthodox' and as in some of the Quasi-'Protestant' perversions of so-called "Christian" Paedocommunion today]. Indeed, it was given her precisely by the Pagan Magistrates. She may very well have been coaxed or even forced into drinking the idolatrous mixture. At any rate, it poisoned her, especially psychically. For, as a result, "the girl was no more able to speak or to indicate the crime which had been committed [by the pagan Magistrates against her] - than she had before been able to understand it or to prevent it."

Here indeed is Paedocommunion - yes, Non-Christian and Pagan Paedocommunion - inflicted upon a truly-defenceless toddler. And Cyprian rightly calls it a "crime."

Indeed, "the mother" of this tiny child, explains Cyprian, had - while herself "escaping" during the previous persecution - irresponsibly "forsaken" her own little daughter. Yet later, apparently during a lull in the persecutions, "when we [Christians] were sacrificing" or bringing gifts to God while at Church, "the mother" - now re-united to the little child - "brought it in with her...."

"[Then,] the girl mingled with the saints, [but] became impatient. That [now somewhat slightly-older though] still-tender child, confessed a consciousness of the fact [of what had previously been done to it] - with such signs as it could."

Then, continues Cyprian, "the Deacon began to offer the cup to those present.... The little child, by instinct of the Divine Majesty, turned away its face; compressed its mouth with resisting lips; and refused the cup. Still the Deacon persisted" with the little girl - "and, although against her efforts, forced upon her [as in somewhat similar cases of 'child rape'] some of the Sacrament of the cup.

Note Cyprian himself tells us it was "by the instinct of the Divine Majesty" that the infant "turned away...with resisting lips and refused the cup." However, the carnal Deacon, less aware of "the instinct of the Divine Majesty" than even that profane and impatient and refusing infant - sinfully persisted in trying to intinct her against her will.

"Then there followed a sobbing and vomiting. In a profane[d] body and mouth, the Eucharist could not remain.... This much about an infant, which was not yet of an age to speak about the crime committed by others against her." Thus the eye-witness Cyprian.

When one reads the whole of Cyprian's Treatise III at one sitting, it is very clear he opposes 'Open-Table' Communion. Indeed, he wants thoroughly to scrutinize the 'Lapsed' (for some three years, he indicates in Epistle 52:2) - before re-admitting them to Communion.

"The idea of Paedocommunionists that Cyprian is indifferent to or even in favour of the action of the Deacon in III:25 in forcing communion wine down the throat of the unwilling and resistant child of lapsed parents, and that this authenticates Christian 'Paedocommunion' (sic) - is bizarre indeed. Especially so in the light of this Cyprian's castigation of Clergy and Deacons elsewhere (Treatise III:6 compare III:15-22 & Epistles 24-27) - for their laxity at the Eucharist re the Lapsed (and their seed).

#### 517. Cyprian's antipaedocommunionistic purpose in his Treatise III:25

Now the above event is mentioned by Cyprian not at all to justify 'Child Communion' - but, if anything, to illustrate its dangers. Cyprian clearly tells us that the little child was "not yet able to eat meat, on account of its years." Here Cyprian discounts the possibility of such [tender-age]



children eating meat - whether meat dedicated to idols; whether Passover lamb meat; or whether the meat-like 'flesh' of Christ [as 'Post-Cyprianic Transubstantiationists' and other advocates of a 'real physical presence of Christ' at and in or under the Eucharist rather "cannibalistically" allege].

Surely, this interdicts 'Child-Communion'! Whether conceived symbolically; whether conceived Cyprianitically; and even more so, whenever misperceived in terms of con- or transubstantiation.

It should be obvious that the first event - the feeding by the pagan Magistrates of the little girl with a bread-and-wine mixture dedicated to idols - has nothing at all to do with Holy Communion. Indeed, it is no more related to the Christian Eucharist than was the Pagan-Gnostic Marcus's evil blessing of wine cups - in the earlier 185 A.D. days of Irenaeus.1529

Yet even the second event mentioned by Cyprian - the force-feeding by the Deacon of the little girl breadlessly with the wine from the Lord's cup - is not one of voluntary manducation by a toddler. It is an event about a little girl (puella) perhaps by now old enough haltingly to speak about (but not yet old enough to understand) her ordeal of previously having been given, by pagan Magistrates, left-overs of bread mixed with wine previously dedicated to an idol.

The child was now old enough to refuse - and did so refuse - this force-fed communion wine at the Lord's Supper. For, explains Cyprian, the child then, "by instinct[!] of the Divine Majesty[!] - turned away its face; compressed its mouth with resisting lips; and refused the cup."

But the wretchedly-misguided Deacon then "forced" the unwilling child to drink wine from that cup. So the child, continues Cyprian, then sobbed and vomited - having "a profane[d] body" not fit to receive "the Eucharist." For this child had experienced a "crime committed against her by others" (cf. Matthew 18:6).

Clearly, this "resisting" and unwilling little girl was no unweaned baby. Consequently, if to force 'Paedocommunion' on a [toddling] little child like this is indeed a "crime"[!] - to force it on unweaned babies is an even greater crime (according to the eye-witness Cyprian).

Yes, this is according to that very Cyprian whom modern Paedocommunionists have so tried to manipulate into endorsing their own later heresy. So much for their scholarship!

For, as Rev. Dr. Richard Bacon pointed out to the Paedocommunionist Linn in 1995: "Cyprian did not indicate that this was a normal occurrence. It was the very unusual aspect of it that he was using to make his larger point that the uninitiated ought not to receive the things of the Lord.

"Second, notice that he referred to the fact that the child's refusal of the cup was at the prompting of Divine Majesty. It is simply impossible to conclude from this passage all that the Paedocommunionist claims for it."

So none of the above facts evidence an established practice of 'Infant-Communion' in any congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Very frankly, none evidence even 'Child-Communion' for toddlers - as an established church practice (by 251 A.D.).

For the Deacon's actions in breadlessly trying to force the wine into the mouth and down the throat of the little girl, are strongly at variance with the voluntary nature of manducation at Holy Communion even by confirmed Communicants themselves. See First Corinthians 11:20-33 cf. Matthew 26:26-29 & Luke 22:7-20.

Obviously, the Deacon's unwarranted and magically-induced misdemeanour was deliberate. Very possibly (yet quite illicitly) he might even merely have been trying to 'undo' the previous damage caused to the girl by the pagan Magistrates when they gave her bread mixed with wine previously dedicated to an idol.

Significantly, Cyprian does not anywhere here approve of the Deacon's superstitious action of offering the Eucharist to a little girl not yet old enough coherently to speak about former wrongs inflicted upon her by others. And elsewhere, as we shall see later, Cyprian insists on catechizing all - before eucharizing them.

Cyprian in Treatise III:25-26 rather calls both affairs of paedocommunionizing the little girl - first, by the pagan Magistrates before an idol; and later, by a lapsed Deacon inside a congregation - "a crime committed against her by others." However, observes Cyprian, "that still-tender child confessed a consciousness of the fact, with such signs as it could" - viz. as regards the first of those two different paedocommunionizations.

Indeed, the girl (though seemingly not yet mature enough to manducate the Sacrament) was nevertheless quite old enough to refuse the Eucharist. She very rightly did so - before the syncretizing, semi-repaganizing Deacon then wrongly succeeded in force-feeding her with wine from the communion cup.

Moreover, just a few lines later in Cyprian's treatise, a pushy "woman...in advanced life and of more mature age" who had gate-crashed a Christian Communion Service - when she then stealthily and willingly and wrongly grabbed and wolfed down the Sacrament - "received not food but a sword for herself...as if taking some deadly poison." For she then "began presently to be tortured and to become stiffened with frenzy" - until, "shivering and trembling, she fell down.

"The crime of her dissimulated conscience was not long unpunished.... God was taking vengeance!" 1530

Should one thus not say, with Calvin (in his Institutes of the Christian Religion IV:16:30), that also Paedocommunionists are poisoners of children? And should one therefore not also say, with Paul, that such undiscerning abusers of the Lord's Supper deserve to get sick, and some even to die?

O yes, indeed! One should indeed so say with Calvin. And no with Calvin alone. But also with Holy Scripture itself. First Corinthians 11:20-30f.

518. Paedocommunionist misrepresentations of the actions of the wayward Deacon

Some modern Quasi-Protestant Paedocommunionists argue that Cyprian's Treatise III:25 implicitly sanctions 'Christian' Paedocommunion because it does not there state that Cyprian rebuked the persistent Deacon for forcing communion wine into the resisting infant of lapsed parents. But this argument does not help such modern 'Protestant' or even Ex-Protestant Paedocommunionists as by and large oppose such infant intinction.

Some of them argue that Cyprian was here not opposed to the Deacon's action - because Cyprian does not in Treatise III:25 say so. Yet this overlooks the fact that Cyprian did in other works of his oppose similar misconduct at the Eucharist.

Indeed, this modern paedocommunionistic argument makes the modern Quasi-Protestant Paedocommunionistic (if not also the intinctionistic Eastern-Orthodox) appeal to this passage in Cyprian - look ridiculous. For if, as they assume, Cyprian does not here disapprove of the Deacon's action of forcefully intincting a resisting and profane infant - how can they themselves then so disapprove?

Let it be noted that eye-witness Cyprian clearly says the Deacon "forced on" the little girl "some of the Sacrament of the cup" - just before Cyprian goes on to condemn the next "crime." That latter concerns a mature woman who insinuated herself secretly and then grabbed and wolfed down the eucharistic "food...as if taking some deadly poison" etc.

Indeed, why don't these Quasi-Protestant Paedocommunionists themselves adopt intinction - or at the very least admit Cyprian knows nothing about their own brand of Toddler Communionism? Especially in light of Cyprian's own statement at Treatise III:33f that those of whose actions Cyprian disapproves - "ought to fall and prostrate themselves to God" and repent, because "they regard a Communion as valid with those who are not Communicants" and that you should "flee from such men as much as you can!"

The account of this profane and eucharist-resisting and communion-refusing demon-oppressed infant girl of lapsed parents, force-fed with communion wine against her own will, needs no further evaluation. For it is to be found amidst the rigorous Cyprian's series of seven examples of an all-too-lax communing of insufficiently-repentant lapsed persons. Every one of those examples represents God's judgment on those whom Cyprian himself calls "heedless persons" (earlier in the same treatise at III:15).

Indeed, Cyprian himself says that the little girl "turned away its face" from the communion cup precisely "by the instinct of the Divine Majesty." What candid Paedocommunionist can here with a straight face deny that the eye-witnessing and godly Cyprian here approves of the cup-refusing action of the little girl which he himself describes as having been made "by the instinct of the Divine Majesty"?

Cyprian nowhere commends the Deacon for trying to force-feed the little girl - with wine from the communion "cup." To the contrary. The eye-witness and godly Cyprian himself indicates it was by a God-given action made "by the instinct of the Divine Majesty" that "the little child" then "turned away" and "compressed its mouth with resisting lips and refused the cup."

In his Twelfth Treatise (III:Testimonies 94), Cyprian states "that the Eucharist is to be received with fear and honour." Because "in Leviticus [7:20]...‘whatever soul shall eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of salvation which is the Lord’s, and his uncleanness is still upon him - that soul shall perish from his people!’"

And because "also in the First [Epistle] to the Corinthians [11:27]: ‘Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.’" Indeed, in Treatise III:25, Cyprian describes the demon-oppressed infant as "profane" - and thus as exhibiting an uncleanness prohibitive of manducating at the Supper.

Furthermore, the persistent Deacon’s force-feeding of that resistant and refusing infant - is reminiscent of the heathen practice of the pagan Magistrates who earlier had given that same child a mixture of bread and wine dedicated to an idol. In relating both events in the same disapproving chapter, Cyprian is suggesting that also the misguided Deacon (cf. the same Treatise at its chapter 6) had taken his cue from the pagan Magistrates - rather than from the Word of God which knows nothing of such infant intinction.

It was by a God-given action, "by the instinct of the Divine Majesty," says Cyprian, that "the little child" then "turned away" and "compressed its mouth with resisting lips and refused the cup." Therefore it was not "by the instinct of the Divine Majesty" that the wayward Deacon "forced on her some of the sacrament of the cup."

That latter action was not given by God. It was instigated - through a "Deacon" - by that same Satanic and diabolical despot who had earlier caused the Pagan Magistrates to give that same child bread mingled with wine previously dedicated to an idol.

#### 519. Augustine’s disapproval of the 250 A.D. cases of ‘Paedocommunion’ in Carthage

Even more than a century and a half after Cyprian and his Third Treatise, the great Augustine of Hippo-Regius clearly seems to have disapproved of what the Deacon did in offering the ‘sacramental cup’ of the Eucharist to the little girl. For it is clear Augustine specifically referred back to that sad event.<sup>1531</sup>

It is very true that Augustine was himself (by that later time) rather ambiguous on the matter of ‘Post-Catechetical Child Communion’ etc. Yet he was quite unambiguous in his insistence on giving the Eucharist only to those who had priorly been catechized. Though sadly something of a Sacramentalist himself, also Augustine clearly condemned Pre-Catechetical Communion.

Thus, Augustine in Hippo-Regius rejected ‘Infant-Communion’ in general - and, in particular, the case in nearby Carthage where Cyprian described the breadless force-feeding of a little girl with communion wine. For Augustine wrote<sup>1532</sup> that the little girl eye-witnessed by Cyprian had been forced "to take part in the profane rites of idolatrous worship." Then, "afterward, in the Church," she herself "expelled from her mouth...the Eucharist, when it was given to her."

Furthermore, continued Augustine, the force-fed little girl expelled the communion wine from her mouth "in order that persons of riper years might not imagine that in this sin they do no wrong to the children." For adults "do" indeed clearly "wrong" uncatechized children like that little girl, when they force them to 'communicate' in this appalling way (which has now become standard practice in Eastern- 'Orthodox' [?] churches).

Augustine thus regarded the force-feeding of eucharistic wine to uncatechized children - now practised for centuries by the Eastern- 'Orthodox' and not infrequently even by certain modern Pseudo- 'Protestants' - as a "sin" committed by adults against Almighty God. He also rightly saw it as even a very grave "wrong" done by such adults also against such children.

So, after the little girl was thus wronged by the Deacon and the other confirmed Communicants present who might have been encouraging that Deacon thus - Augustine re-related that a dire "warning was given to themselves" by what Cyprian himself called "Divine Providence." It was, said Augustine, a "warning" against those who "rushed heedlessly to those Sacraments from which they ought by all means, in proof of penitence, to have abstained." Cf. Cyprian's Treatise III:15f.

A stronger Augustinian statement against pre-catechetical 'Child-Communion' - and especially against 'Infant-Communion' being given to babies and toddlers - is scarcely imaginable. Even more interestingly - Augustine was here but endorsing Cyprian's own views on that subject.

#### 520. Anglican 'Toddler Communionist' G.N. Davies on Cyprian's views

Even the rigid Paedocommunionist G.N. Davies - in his 1978 paper *The Concept of Covenantal Communion* - seems to recognize that Cyprian was not an advocate of giving the Eucharist to sucklings. Regarding "Infant Communion," Davies somewhat speciously alleges<sup>1533</sup> that "the first definite reference[?!] to the practice is found in the writings of Cyprian about the year 251.... It is not the contention of this paper that sucklings or babes who are incapable of feeding themselves, ought to be given Communion. Such is the practice of the Eastern-Orthodox Church" - which, just like Davies, however, likewise misappeals to Cyprian as if he himself had endorsed their views.

Indeed, adds G.N. Davies, "such a practice [viz. that of eucharizing sucklings] only serves to confuse the difference between the Sacraments. Baptism is initiatory, confirming the child's entrance into the covenant of grace; whereas the Eucharist is ongoing, enabling the participant to respond to the covenant."

We ourselves do not agree that Cyprian is indeed referring to what the Paedocommunionist Davies here so speciously calls "the first definite reference" to "Infant-Communion" (sic). However, we certainly can agree with G.N. Davies in his denial "that sucklings or babes who are incapable of feeding themselves, ought to be given Communion."

Most dubiously, G.N. Davies then continues: "Such a covenantal response as is required by those admitted to the Supper, is capable from two or three year olds." One cannot, however, expect

it of unweaned sucklings.

Nevertheless, alleges Davies, "one can even speak of a 'discernment of the body' [cf. First Corinthians 11:29] appropriate to the age for such little ones" after their weaning. Here, one must wonder if even Davies really believes what he has written.

"Thus," explains G.N. Davies, "it is the preference of the present author to speak of 'Covenantal-Communion' rather than 'Infant-Communion'.... The setting of Jesus' Last Supper with His Disciples, is replete with covenantal colours. It was the night of the Passover."

Too bad, however, that Davies did not grasp that only 'mature' Communicants who had finished catechizing (in the greatest Catechetical School there ever was), communed at "Jesus' Last Supper" - precisely as in the case of "the Passover" which it replaced! We cannot grant to Davies, then, that Cyprian's Third Treatise (on the 'Lapsed') anywhere sanctions even the 'Post-Suckling Communion' alias 'Toddler Communion' which G.N. Davies himself advocates.

Sadly, Rev. Dr. Glenn Davies - after arguing that whether children could "cognitively understand" was irrelevant<sup>1534</sup> - in 1997 managed to persuade the thitherto-conservative Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church of Australia to allow children to be admitted to Holy Communion before they have been confirmed. He was seconded, very effectively, by Deaconess Margaret Rodgers.

The Bishop of North Sydney, Rev. Dr. Paul Barnett, then wisely objected. This would, he rightly observed, mean the collapse of confirmation.

But all to no avail. The theological collapse of the previously-stalwart Sydney Diocese itself was even by then well and truly underway.

We have just seen that the only passage in Cyprian (Treatise III:9-25) cited by Paedocommunionists, does not at all teach what they say it does. Indeed, it teaches the very opposite of what they allege it teaches.

We now turn to other passages than that in Treatise III - passages most Paedocommunionists carefully ignore. And we shall now see that such Cyprianic passages preclude all ecclesiastical paedocommunionism.

521. Cyprian's Treatises Nine to Twelve do not approve of Paedocommunion

We have already dealt at length above with Cyprian's Third Treatise on The Lapsed.<sup>1535</sup> Soon after that, in his Treatise Five,<sup>1536</sup> he cites Proverbs 23:9 & 26:4. There, he refers also to the text Matthew 7:6 later quoted antipaedocommunionistically by the Westminster Confession (29:8q) against admission of the ignorant to the Eucharist.

Writes Cyprian: "We are bidden to keep what is holy within our own knowledge, and not to expose it to be trodden down by swine and dogs." Cyprian then further cites from the famous

passage on the Passover - Exodus 12:13.

In his Ninth Treatise, Cyprian regards the mature[!] sins of adult-ery and fraud and violence - as incompatible with the reception of the Eucharist.<sup>1537</sup> Clearly, this is hardly reconcilable with Communion even in late childhood - and totally irreconcilable with the childish innovations of 'Infant-Communion' and 'Toddler-Communion.'

Last, in his Twelfth Treatise, Cyprian indicates <sup>1538</sup> "that Christ is called a sheep...Who was to be slain...concerning the Sacrament...of the passion." Cyprian then, in a citation from the famous passage Exodus 12:3-12, describes the Passover as the forerunner of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in terms that clearly preclude all Paedocommunion. For no infant nor toddler can meet even just a few of the many following requirements.

Argues Cyprian: "In Exodus, God said to Moses: 'Let them take to themselves each man a sheep...of a year old [in maturity].... All the Congregation of the Synagogue of the children [or sons] of Israel shall kill it.... And they shall take of its blood, and shall place it upon the two [door]posts and upon the threshold.... And they shall eat the flesh...and they shall eat unleavened bread with bitter herbs.... Thus you shall eat it - your loins girt, and your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hands. And you shall eat it in haste. For it is the Lord's Passover.'"

Cyprian next cites yet another Passaover passage, Exodus 12:13 - and connects it to the eating of the tree of life. He states:<sup>1539</sup> "There shall be blood for a sign to you upon the houses in which you shall be! And I will look on the blood, and will protect you..... Blessed are they that do His Commandments, so that they may have power over the tree of life [Revelation 22:13-14]." Once again, ability to do all this, requires maturity.

Cyprian then further cites Exodus 12:11 - once again regarding the Passover. "Thus shall you eat it - your loins girt, and your shoes on your feet, and your staves in your hands. And you shall eat it in haste - for it is the Lord's Passover."<sup>1540</sup> Here too, children are excluded from such eating. For what baby has shoes on its feet? And what small child carries a staff in his hand?

Subsequently, he declares: "It is of small account to be baptized, and to receive the Eucharist. Unless one profit by it, both in deeds and works."<sup>1441</sup>

Shortly thereafter, he cites Exodus 12:4 on the Passover:<sup>1442</sup> "In one house shall it be eaten. You shall not cast forth the meat abroad, outside of the house!" For its manducation is to be restricted only to qualified Members of the Household of Faith - and not to be prostituted in lax communing!

Finally, Cyprian concludes<sup>1443</sup> "that heresies must needs be, in order that they which are approved may be made manifest [First Corinthians 11:19]" as regards 'the Lord's Supper' [First Corinthians 11:20]. Indeed, he insists "that the Eucharist is to be received with fear and honour" and not to be worshipped superstitiously even by ignorant infants or toddlers.

Cyprian then motivates this from Leviticus 7:20 and First Corinthian 11:27. "In Leviticus: 'But whatever soul shall eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of salvation which is the Lord's, and his

uncleanness is still upon him - that soul shall perish from his people.' Also in the First [Epistle] to the Corinthians: 'Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord!'"

There too, Cyprian's language is antipaedocommunionistic. Clearly, then - to Cyprian - the sacramental elements were never to be handled carelessly nor worshipped superstitiously. Least of all by ignorant infants or toddlers.

521. Cyprian's Epistles 2 to 9 are all catechetically antipaedocommunionistic

So much, then, for Cyprian's Treatises. The full weight of Cyprian's considerable catechetical testimony elsewhere in his other writings, is also much against the unbiblical practice of 'Infant Communion' and even 'Child Communion' (etc.).

That was a practice which at least one of the badly persecuted churches especially in his own North Africa had but recently and indeed quite syncretistically taken over from Paganism through the agency of neo-paganistic elements within the Church herself. A perusal of the rest of the extant relevant Epistles to and from Cyprian, will bear this out.

In Epistle Two, the clergy in Rome wrote to the clergy in Carthage about the withdrawal of the latter's Overseer Cyprian during the times of the Decian persecutions. That may very well to some extent explain how, during that time of Cyprian's withdrawal from effective Overseership as regards the Church in Carthage, things began to get out of hand in the Carthaginian Church also as regards the rather baleful then-beginnings of its getting infiltrated by neo-paganizing and/or re-paganizing paedocommunionistic elements.

Wrote the clergy from Rome: "Cyprian has for a certain reason withdrawn...because he is a person of eminence and because a conflict is impending..., for the sake of co-operating with His servants in their struggle against the adversary.... We are unwilling, therefore, beloved brethren, that you should be found hirelings. But we desire you to be good Shepherds....

"Even those who have fallen, may amend their minds...and...should...confess and...make amends for their previous sin...if any who may have fallen into this temptation...repent.... Catechumens, when seized with sickness [cf. perhaps First Corinthians 11:27-30], ought not to be deceived."1544

In Epistle Three, Cyprian responds to this.<sup>1545</sup> However, he there made no reference to the matter of the Catechumens mentioned in the letter from the clergy in Rome. Hence one must assume Cyprian agreed with them that both timid Shepherds (and the Deacon who had dismayed Cyprian himself by force-feeding the little girl with the communion wine in Carthage) and Catechumens (who might recently quite wrongfully have eucharized and come down with sickness as a consequence), should all take note and guard against any further backsliding.

For in Epistle Nine, Cyprian wrote to the clergy concerning certain Presbyters who had rashly granted peace to the Lapsed before the persecution had been appeased. They had made that



gratuitous grant - without the privity of the Overseers.1546

Here, the argument is contained in the following words of Epistle Fourteen "to the Presbyters and Deacons." There, Cyprian said that "some, too little mindful of discipline, and hasty with a rash precipitation - who had already begun to communicate with the Lapsed - were checked."1547

In that Epistle Nine, then, Cyprian wrote:1548 "The blessed Apostle has said, 'You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table and of the table of demons' [First Corinthians 10:21]! He who withholds these words from our brethren, deceives them - wretched as they are! So that they who, truly repenting, might satisfy God both as the Father and as merciful - with their prayers and works - are seduced more deeply to perish....

"In smaller sins, sinners may repent for a set time and, according to the rules of discipline, come to public confession [or profession of faith] - and, by imposition of the hand of the Overseer and Clergy, [at Confirmation] receive the right [or privilege] of Communion. [But] now, with their time [of being catechized?] still unfulfilled - while persecution is still raging, while the peace of the Church itself has not yet been restored - they are [wrongly] being admitted to Communion....

"While the repentance has not yet been performed; [and while profession of faith or] confession has not yet been made, [and while] the hands of the Overseer and Clergy have not yet been laid upon them [at Confirmation] - the Eucharist is [wrongly] being given to them! Although it is written: 'Whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord' [First Corinthians 11:27]!...

"They will be guilty who are in Office, and do not suggest these things to brethren so that, having been instructed by those placed above them, they may do all things with the fear of God and with the observance given and prescribed by Him.... They [the lax Clergy with their relaxed practices of 'Open-Communion'] lay the blessed martyrs open to ill-will and...communicate with the Lapsed and offer and give them the Eucharist - when even if the Martyrs...were to consider the Scripture less carefully [First Corinthians 11:20-34]..., they would be admonished by the Presbyters and Deacons, as was always done in the past" prior to the Decian Persecutions!

523. Cyprian's Epistles 10 to 14 are all catechetically antipaedocommunionistic

Epistle Ten deals with the importance of issuing Certificates of Good Standing to be required of all would-be Communicants. There, Cyprian very rightly states also in respect of the later possible re-communication of those Communicants who had previously lapsed:1549

"Although you [Martyrs and Confessors] sent letters to me in which you ask that your wishes should be examined, and that peace should be granted to certain of the Lapsed as soon as with the end of the persecution we should have begun to meet with our Clergy, and to be gathered together once more - those Presbyters, contrary to the Gospel Law, contrary also to your respectful petition, before penitence was fulfilled, before confession even of the gravest and most heinous sin was made, before hands were placed upon the repentant by the Bishops and Clergy, dare to offer on their behalf and to give them the Eucharist, that is, to profane the sacred body of the Lord! Although it is written 'Whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty

of the body and blood of the Lord' [First Corinthians 11:27]!"

Here it is very clear Cyprian would not hear of re-communicating any of the lapsed "before penitence was fulfilled" and "before confession...of...sin was made." To do such, says Cyprian, is "to profane the sacred body of the Lord" and to (re-)communicate such persons "unworthily."

Consequently, either to communicate or to re-communicate children or toddlers or babies incapable of expressing their "penitence" and incapable of (re-)making a public "confession...of...sin" - would be, for Cyprian, to (re-)communicate them "unworthily." For that would eliminate the prior need of a [Re-]Profession of Faith on the part of all would-be Communicants!

Continues Cyprian: "I have written both to the Clergy and to the people...to designate those by name, to whom you desire that peace should be granted. For I hear that Certificates are so being given to some, as that it is said 'Let such a one be received to Communion along with his friends!' [cf. Acts 9:2 & 22:5 & 28:21 with First Corinthians 11:20-34 cf. 16:3].

"This was never in any case done by the Martyrs!... I beg you that you will designate by name in the Certificate, those whom you yourselves see; whom you have known; whose repentance you see to be very near to full satisfaction - and so direct to us letters in conformity with faith and discipline" alias discipleship.

In his Eleventh Epistle, 1550 Cyprian wrote "to his brethren among the people who stand fast," that he had heard "that certain of the Presbyters neither mindful of the Gospel nor considering what the Martyrs have written...have already begun to communicate with the Lapsed and to offer on their behalf and to give them the Eucharist." He then objects that "no one can come to communion, unless the hands of the Overseer and Clergy be first imposed upon him" in Confirmation.

Indeed, he then further warns: "Let no one pluck the unripe fruit at a time as yet premature!" Though said here of the Lapsed, it is indeed a mystery how the latter remark can be reconciled with any brand of Paedocommunionism.

Thus too, in his Twelfth Epistle - Concerning the Lapsed and Catechumens - Cyprian urged the clergy that also "Catechumens...should not be left without superintendence.... I think that our brethren must be dealt with.... They who have received Certificates...[must] be able to make confession of their sin [and thus also profession of their faith] - so that, with the imposition of hands upon them [viz. at their Confirmation] for repentance, they should come to the Lord....

"Those shall not be forsaken by the aid and assistance of the Lord who meekly, humbly, and with true repentance have persevered in good works.... To the 'Hearers' [Audientibus, meaning the Catechumens] also..., let your diligence not be wanting!" 1551

Also in his Fourteenth Epistle, Cyprian adds: 1552 "I wrote letters.... To the Presbyters and Deacons...was not wanting the vigour of the Presbyterate.... Some, too little mindful of the discipline, and hasty with a rash precipitation [and] who had already begun to communicate with the Lapsed, were restrained by my interposition."

This seems to be a perfect description of the persistent and rash Deacon who force-fed communion wine to the resisting and profane infant of lapsed parents in Cyprian's Treatise on the Lapsed (III:25). Paedocommunionists, note well!

Clearly, all of the above Cyprianic provisions quite exclude 'Toddler-Communion' (sic). They exclude also all other varieties of undisciplined or undisciplined eucharizing.

524. Cyprian's Epistles 24 to 27 are all catechetically antipaedocommunionistic

In Cyprian's Epistle Twenty-Four, Cyprian writes to his Co-Confessors in Rome such as Moyses and Maximus congratulating them for their "virtue" (alias their 'man-ly vir-ility') and their adherence to "the standard" - viz. for having "pledged your brethren from the cup of salvation" and for "the maintenance of discipline" which was to "be kept with firm and rigid observance." As Cyprian ended that Epistle, "I also equally congratulate you for the crown of the Lord's discipline."

In their response to that epistle, Cyprian's above-mentioned Co-Confessors together with Nicostratus and Rufinus - in Epistle Twsenty-Five concurringly write to their colleague Cyprian in Carthage: "We observe that you have worthily rebuked with fitting censure those who, unmindful of their sins, had with hasty and eager desire extorted peace from the Presbyters...and...without respect for the Gospel had with profane facility granted the holy thing of the Lord [viz. the Sacrament of Holy Communion], to dogs - and pearls, to swine.... In your letters, you yourself [Cyprian] also testify.... Spirits are [indeed] to be cheered. Certainly their spirits are to be cheered and to be nourished up to the season of their maturity, and they are to be instructed from the Holy Scriptures."1553

Here the Confessors concur with their colleague Cyprian that he had been right when he worthily rebuked with fitting censure those who...had with profane facility granted " or given the Eucharist "to dogs and...to swine." For would-be Communicants are first "to be nourished up to the season of their imaturity, and they are to be instructed from the Holy Scriptures."

There is thus a right "season" or time of "maturity" - viz., no earlier than adolescence. Before that right "season" or time of "maturity" - would-be Communicants, and/or even the Lapsed who would re-communicate, are first "to be nourished up...and they are to be instructed from the Holy Scriptures." In other words - Catechizing ere Communion not before Teenage!

Why? Because, continue Cyprian's Co-Confessors: "The physician will not give to the sick, the food of healthy bodies [cf. First Corinthians 11:29-32] - lest the unseasonable nourishment, instead of repressing, should stimulate the power of the raging disease."

Good Ministers -like good Physicians - will not give any strong meat to the not-yet-virile (Who still lack manly "virtue." For such strong meat would be "unseasonable nourishment" alias sacramental food unhealthily given before adolescence as "the season of their maturity."

Cyprian's Co-Confessors then go on: "Unfaithful is the scar which the physician has too

quickly produced! And the healing is undone by any little casualty, if the remedies be not used faithfully."

Such is the error not only of those who would over-hastily recommunicate the Lapsed. Such is the error also of Paedocommunionists. For also they "too quickly" wish to have fruit "produced" in those they eucharize - before the latter reach their fruit-bearing age of "virtue" and virility. And in such cases, the remedies of the sacramental bread and wine are "not used faithfully" either by those eucharizing or by those being eucharized.

Of course, after cessation of the Decian persecution, some of the Lapsed did now desire to be restored to Communion. However, explain Cyprian's Co-Confessors, "if they betray too much impatience, and demand Communion with intolerable eagerness - they vainly utter with petulant and unbridled tongues those querulous and invidious reproaches which avail nothing against the truth. Since they might by their own right have retained that which they of their own free will have sought, they are now by a necessity compelled to plead for [it]. For the faith which could confess Christ, could also have been kept in communion by Christ. We bid you [Cyprian], blessed and most glorious father, ever heartily farewell in the Lord; and hold us in remembrance!"

Here Cyprian's Co-Confessors say that before such backslidings, all of the Lapsed had "the faith which could confess Christ." This means that all of them were previously able to confess Christ, and then did so confess Him.... That was a pre-condition for their earlier eucharizing. At that time, none of them had been a small child incapable of making such a confession or profession of faith.

It also means that all such lapsed adults would after their repentance need to re-confess Christ before being re-eucharized. And it further implies that also Cyprian agreed with these Co-Confessors about this. For they here salute him as their "blessed and most glorious father" alias their mature Catechist in the Christian Faith.

Incidentally, all this seems to imply that the eye-witness Cyprian would have rebuked also the Deacon who tried to force-feed communion wine into the mouth and down the throat of the unwilling little girl of lapsed parents. True, Treatise III:25 does not say Cyprian did then so rebuke that Deacon. But the above Epistle 25:6 from Cyprian's Co-Confessor colleagues assures us of Cyprian: "We observe that you have both rebuked with fitting censure, and worthily - those who...with hasty and eager desire...and...without respect for the Gospel had with profane facility granted the holy thing of the Lord [viz. the Eucharist], to dogs - and pearls, to swine." Compare too the Westminster Confession of Faith 29:8 - citing First Corinthians 5:6,7,13 & Matthew 7:6!

To the above, Pro-Paedocommunionists might object that Epistle 25 doesn't say a thing about catechizing as a prerequisite for receiving the Eucharist. However, Cyprian's Co-Confessor colleagues had just told him: "'We observe that you have both rebuked with fitting censure, and worthily, those who unmindful of their sins had with hasty and eager desire extorted peace from the Presbyters...and...without respect for the Gospel had with profane facility granted the holy thing of the Lord [viz. the Eucharist], to dogs - and pearls, to swine.... Certainly their spirits are to be cheered and to be nourished up to the season of their maturity and they are to be instructed from the Holy Scriptures."

Note the words "nourished up" and "instructed." Do such words not very clearly imply catechizing? Those who had lapsed, had previously been catechized before they had then been communicating prior to their lapsing. They now needed to be re-catechized after their lapsing before they should be allowed to recommunicate. That is the crux of many of Cyprian's Epistles and of some of the material in a couple of his Treatises. Compare too Westminster Larger Catechism Question and Answer 173.

"Question 173. 'May any who profess the faith [as did the Lapsed], and desire to come to the Lord's Supper, be kept from it?' Answer: 'Such as are found to be ignorant or scandalous, notwithstanding their profession of the faith and desire to come to the Lord's Supper, may and ought to be kept from that Sacrament by the power which Christ hath left in His Church, until they receive instruction and manifest their reformation.'" That clearly applies both to the lapsed parents of the little girl in Treatise III:25 - as well as to that little girl herself!

A major question, however, is whether or not God demanded less requirements for eucharizing from baptized infants - than he did from baptized and catechized adults who lapsed before the latter might subsequently be re-eucharized. On that matter, consider the following.

Note how Cyprian's Co-Confessors here say that the eucharistic medicine can incur "casualty, if...not used faithfully.... So that men of this kind should justly know...they themselves are more advantaged by the very delay" and "necessary postponement" as regards their manducation. The latter is limited to "they who confess Christ."

Thus, even backslidden Communicants are to be refused manducation. For "if they...have not kept the confession of God," they are to be "deprived of Communion." For "the faith which could confess Christ, could also have been kept by Christ in Communion!"

Note here especially the words: "casualty if...not used faithfully" and "delay" and "necessary postponement" and "deprived of communion" and "the faith which could confess Christ." The views of Cyprian and his colleagues here, are totally irreconcilable with Infant-Communion and Toddler-Communion. For they were obviously very strongly opposed to the eucharizing of all inadequately-uncatechized persons.

In his Epistle Twenty-Six, Cyprian himself acknowledged a letter to him from some of the Lapsed who humbly alleged their repentance. In responding, Cyprian bids them to "live quietly and tranquilly according to the Lord's discipline."

And in his Epistle Twenty-Seven, Cyprian commends "the Presbyters and Deacons" for having acted "uprightly and with discipline." How so, and when so? When they "decided not to communicate with Gaius the Presbytery of Didda and his Deacon who - by communicating with the Lapsed" - had themselves "frequently taken in their wicked errors."

The contents of Epistle 25, then, are thoroughly expressive of what Cyprian himself believed. This can be seen from reading seriatim all of the sequential material from Epistle 24 through to Epistle 27 - as set out here above.

Very clearly, Cyprian was opposed to all indiscriminate eucharizing even of others in the households of those who had lapsed. Indeed, it is in this light that also his Treatise III:15-26 needs to be interpreted.

525. Cyprian's Epistles 51 to 55 are all catechetically antipaedocommunionistic

In Epistle Fifty-One, Cyprian deals with eucharistic discipline for those who had lapsed. Some of the Non-Lapsed Christians felt the Lapsed should simply be given the Eucharist as if they had never lapsed. Others of the Non-Lapsed Christians were overly-rigorous, and said that the lapsed should never again be re-communicated. Following First Corinthians 5:1-13 & 11:20-34 and Second Corinthians 2:1-8 & 7:8-13, Cyprian wisely gave the following sage advice:1554

"I wrote1555...that - an Assembly for counsel having been gathered together with Overseer, Presbyters, Deacons and Confessors as well as with the Laity who stand fast - we should deal with the case of the Lapsed.... That letter was sent throughout the whole World, and was brought to the knowledge of all the churches and all the brethren [cf. Acts 15:23 to 16:5]....

"Hope of Communion and peace should not wholly be denied to the Lapsed, lest they should fail still more through desperation - and, because the Church was closed to them, should, like the World, live like Heathens. Nor yet, on the other hand, should the censure of the Gospel be relaxed so that they might rashly rush to Communion. But that repentance should be long protracted, and the Paternal clemency should be sought sorrowfully."

In his Fifty-Second Epistle, Cyprian writes at length about those who had lapsed as a result of torture. He declares that "it may be sufficient for such as have lost their glory...that we ought not...to close the place of pardon to them and deprive them of...our Communion, to whom we think it may be sufficient for entreating the mercy of the Lord, that for three years continually and sorrowfully...they have lamented."

This recalls the three years of catechization specified by the earlier Clement of Alexandria and Hippolytus of Pontus. Too, it foreshadows the same period mentioned in the subsequent A.D. 325 Council of Nicea and the Apostolic Constitutions - later presupposed also by Calvin in his catechization of infantly-baptized covenant children from about ten years of age onward (until attaining the minimum Talmudic age of thirteen years mentioned in Aboth 5:21 cf. Luke 2:40-47).1556

In his Fifty-Third Epistle - On Granting Peace to the Lapsed - Cyprian and forty of his colleagues denied that "Communion [is] to be granted by us to the dying.... The Eucharist is appointed for this very purpose that it may be a safeguard to the receivers...[so] that...we may arm those whom we wish to be safe, against the adversary....

"How do we make them fit for the cup of martyrdom - if we do not first admit them to drink, in the Church [at the Lord's Supper], the cup of the Lord by the right of Communion?"1557 That is indeed the question!

Note above that Communion was not to be dispensed to all and sundry. There was a need, said Cyprian, carefully and discriminatingly to " admit them to drink...the cup of the Lord."

Thus, there was to be no automatic eucharizing of covenantal infants and uncatechized children. Hence, in his Fifty-Fifth Epistle, Cyprian urged Christians to be mature - because "mindful of the Eucharist." Thus the Lord's Supper was not for the suckling's nor for the toddler's mouth. For the Communicant must be "mindful" of "the hand which has received the Lord's body."1558

Infants and toddlers have only tiny little minds, and cannot properly be called "mindful." Yet Cyprian's here is a blanket statement about the Eucharist, regardless of the age of the manducators. And even Paedocommunionists themselves tell us age is not a factor as regards the requirements of admission to eucharizing. Hence, also this citation implies Antipaedocommunionism..

526. Also Cyprian's Epistle 62 is catechetically antipaedocommunionistic

Cyprian's Sixty-Second Epistle is stated to be: On the Sacrament of the Cup of the Lord. There, Cyprian states<sup>1559</sup> that "nothing must be done by us but what the Lord first did on our behalf, as that the cup which is offered in remembrance of Him should be offered...with wine."

Infants haven no such remembrance. Nor can they testify by offering in remembrance that which they do not already know. Neither should they, nor toddlers, drink wine.

Why not? Cyprian explains: "For we find in Genesis [9:20f] also, in respect of the Sacrament, in Noah this same thing." It "was to them" - viz. to Noah and his sons and their wives - "a precursor and figure of the Lord's passion.... He drank wine" and "was drunken.... Noah, setting forth a type of future truth, did not drink water, but wine - and thus expressed the figure of the passion of the Lord."

Now Noah was an adult at that time. So too were all his children, for all of them were married then. Also their spouses were then adults.

None of those who had been in the ark and who came forth from it, were then still minors. Thus, Noah's clearly-alcoholic wine is irreconcilable with 'Child-Communion' and especially with 'Infant-Intinction' etc.

At this point, certain teetotalistic practitioners of Paedocommunion (such as the Mormons etc.) object that Christ's communion wine was non-alcoholic and therefore suitable also for small children (and even for infants). Yet Cyprian says that the communion wine was as intoxicating as was Noah's. On this, Cyprian cites Psalm 23:5, viz.: "Your inebriating cup, how excellent it is!"

Explains Cyprian: "Now the cup which inebriates, is assuredly mingled with wine! For water cannot inebriate anybody. And the cup of the Lord inebriates in such a way as Noah too was intoxicated - [after] drinking wine." Indeed, "in the cup with wine - the people is made one with Christ [through that 'cup of the Lord']. And the assembly of believers is associated and conjoined

with Him on Whom it believes."

Very clearly, then, there is no room here for any view of 'Infant Communion' - or even of 'Child-Communion.' Indeed, the notion of babies or even toddlers becoming inebriated at the Lord's Table, is altogether nauseating. As also Rev. Dr. John Calvin points out (Institutes IV:16:30), "Paedocommunion is poison."

Cyprian further states in that same Epistle 62:4 that "also in the Presbyter Melchizedek, we see prefigured the Sacrament of the sacrifice of the Lord..... Scripture testifies and says, 'And Melchizedek King of Salem brought forth bread and wine' [Genesis 14:18].... Our Lord Jesus...offered a sacrifice to God the Father, and offered that very same thing which Melchizedek had offered. That is, bread and wine; to wit, His body and blood."

Very significantly, Scripture implies that this bread and wine was given by Melchizedek only to Abraham and to his three hundred and eighteen catechized men slaves or "trained servants born in his own household." Genesis 14:14. There, the Hebrew word *cha:niykaayv* should be translated "those whom he had catechized" - rather than as those "trained" (as in the King James Bible).

No infants or toddlers but only adolescent or adult catechizees were in Abraham's army right before and during that battle. Indeed, they were even somewhat older - thereafter, when Melchizedek gave out the bread and the wine to Abraham and to those whom Abraham had priorly catechized. For in the Hebrew of Genesis 14:14f, it is clear that the bread and wine were there given not to babes or toddlers nor to children - but to catechized menservants!

Cyprian then discusses Proverbs 9:1-5 and Genesis 49:8-12. The first teaches that Christ alias God's "Wisdom" has "mixed wine in the chalice" and has "furnished a Table" and says: "'Come eat of My bread and drink of the wine which I have mixed for you!'" The second adds: "Judah, you are the One!... Binding His foal to the vine and His ass's colt to the choice vine, He washes His garments in wine and His clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine!"

Here, Cyprian explains that "the Holy Spirit by Solomon shows before[hand] the type of the Lord's sacrifice, making mention of the immolated victim and of the bread and wine...and says 'Wisdom has...mixed wine [and]...also furnished a Table'...and has said: "Come, eat of My bread and drink of the wine!'"...

"He declares the wine mixed. That is, he [Solomon] foretells with prophetic voice, the cup of the Lord mixed with...wine, so that it may appear that this was done in our Lord's passion which had before been predicted. In the blessing of Judah, also this same thing is signified...when the blood of the grape is mentioned. What else is set forth, than the wine of the cup of the blood of the Lord?"

Proverbs 9:1-18 presupposes the prior attainment of adolescence by those there invited to manducate of the bread and wine at Wisdom's Table. Indeed, so too does Genesis 49:8f.



Cyprian then goes on in the Epistle to link manducation at the Passover Sacrifice with manducation at the Lord's Supper. For the Passover was replaced by Christ, just before Calvary, with the Lord's Supper for His mature Disciples alone. Thus, the Supper is to be held in the way which the Lord by His example and teaching has instructed us to do.

As Cyprian explains about the Eucharist as the replacement of the Passover lamb:1560 "In the cup with wine, the people is made one with Christ, and the Assembly of believers is associated and conjoined with Him on Whom it believes.... In which very Sacrament our people are shown to be made one...like...many grains...make one bread.... 'All the people of the Congregation of the sons of Israel shall kill it [the Passover lamb] in the evening' [Exodus 12:6].... The Lord's passion is the sacrifice which we offer. We ought to do nothing else than what He did [cf. First Corinthians 11:23f]....

"Scripture says, 'For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you keep on showing forth the Lord's death till He comes' [First Corinthians 11:26].... If from among our predecessors, any have either by ignorance or simplicity not observed and kept this which the Lord by His example and teaching has instructed us to do - he may, by the mercy of the Lord, have pardon granted to his simplicity."

Now the Exodus 12 Passover was only for circumcised and catechized adults, and the Supper only for catechized adults (Luke 22). For "instructed" ones. Note the absence of uninstructed and non-manducating babies on both occasions!

Furthermore, as Cyprian above rightly remarks, both were only for professing "believers" - for such as could actually "kill" the Passover lamb and themselves actually "offer" that "sacrifice." Again, no infant or toddler or small child could do nor ever did all of this.

Clearly then, as Cyprian also says above - the Lord's Supper is intending to be observed by those who have "kept this which the Lord by His example and teaching has instructed us to do." And no infant or toddler or small child is so "instructed" - nor is, indeed, even instructable.

527. Cyprian's Epistles 72 to 74 too are catechetically antipaedocommunionistic

In his Epistle Seventy-Two, Cyprian declares the great need for thorough and completed catechization. Says he:1561 "Let men...know...that those Catechumens hold the sound faith and truth of the Church, and advance...to do battle with the devil with a full and sincere acknowledgment of God the Father and of Christ and of the Holy Ghost. Then...they are certainly not deprived of the Sacrament." What an antipaedocommunionistic statement!

Here, Cyprian is talking about pre-catechized adults thereafter baptized and eucharized - as well as about pre-catechized recently-christianized adults who sincerely acknowledged and then shed their blood for Christ before they could be baptized. However, consistent Paedocommunionists - for whom the two Sacraments of Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper are intended for precisely the same group of recipients - should opt for Infant-Intinction rather than for only the post-infantile Toddler-Communion most modern Anti-Credocommunionists advocate. The fact that they do not do so but even object to Infant-Intinction, shows the untenability of their

position.

Too, in his Epistle Seventy-Four, Cyprian boldly declares: 1562 "What a crime is theirs on the one hand who receive, or on the other [hand] theirs who are received, that their foulness not having been washed away by the laver of the Church nor their sins put away - Communion having been rashly seized, they touch the body and blood of the Lord! Although it is written [First Corinthians 11:27]: 'Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.'"

Any comments on this, would be superfluous. Because, from all perspectives, any kind of Paedocommunionism is here unentertainable.

#### 528. Summary of even the sacramentalizing Cyprian's Antipaedocommunionism

No more need be said. Contrary to the claims of Pro-Paedocommunionists like Jeremy Taylor and Joseph Bingham and Chris Keidel and Tommy Lee and G.N. Davies - not even to speak of the Eastern-Orthodox and their quasi- 'orthodox' offshoots such as R.J. Rushdoony and J.B. Jordan - Cyprian, though a sacramentalizer, was solidly antipaedocommunionistic. For he too, like the Church before and after him till the rise of the paedocommunionistic quirks of Eastern-Orthodoxy during the fifth century A.D., required the completion of catechizing before admission to manducation at the Eucharist.

Colonized by the Ancient Phoenicians by way of Phrygia, Carthage practised Pagan Paedocommunionism both before and after the establishment of the Church there around A.D. 180. The great Christian Tertullian of Carthage resisted it. So too did his later Student Cyprian.

At Paedocommunion's first infiltration from Paganism into the Carthaginian Church around A.D. 250, Cyprian (in his Treatise III:25-26) did not accept the novelty of a wayward Deacon's exorcistic force-feeding an infant with communion wine as a normal practice. To the contrary. That Early Church Father there was giving examples of God's vengeance falling upon individuals who were indiscriminately admitted to the Sacrament. That infant was indiscriminately admitted to the Sacrament, and the judgment of God - a 'divine impulse' - overcame her.

There is no place in Cyprian's writings which states infants were 'ordinarily' admitted to manducate at the Eucharist. To the contrary, all of his extant writings require prior catechization for admission thereto. He was a paedobaptistic credo-eucharizing Antipaedocommunionist.

For there can be only one conclusion re Cyprian of Carthage's extant writings. Taken all together, they require both baptism and catechizing before admitting anyone to the Eucharist. They repeatedly warn against indiscriminate distribution of and [sacramental] manducating at the Eucharist.

They are therefore obviously silent about even the possibility of any so-called 'Christian' Paedocommunionism. And they identify the Pagan background of Paedocommunionism and describe an example of it outside of the Church and also another example of its infiltration into one

ecclesiastical congregation in Carthage containing either the wayward or the ‘Lapsed.’

It is true Cyprian disapprovingly notes an instance of children being given elements dedicated to idols. He also notes one solitary ecclesiastical exorcism thereagainst, breadlessly involving communion wine. Yet even there, Cyprian nowhere condones that exorcism. Nor does that exorcism describe an ecclesiastical custom either apostolic or sub-apostolic.

Indeed, just like his patristic predecessors, also Cyprian clearly upholds the attainment of sufficient maturity - after being catechized - as a main pre-requisite for manducating at the Sacramental Meal. In fact, he even demands the re-catechization (over a period of three years) of such Communicants who had lapsed -- as a pre-condition before (re-)communicating them.

So too, it seems, does the Holy Bible, in both the Old and the New Testament. So too does the Intertestamental Literature and the Talmud. So too did the Lord Jesus Christ, His Apostles, the Apostolic Fathers, and all of the Sub-Apostolic Fathers including Cyprian (and beyond).

For, as we shall see in the next chapters, this continued also for at least a century after Cyprian - till around A.D. 350. Moreover, even amid the then-increasing paedocommunionization of the Church, Antipaedocommunionism was still the view of most of the Later Church Fathers from A.D. 350 to 450 (and beyond) - until the rise of ritualistic Eastern-‘Orthodoxy’ (sic).

The Antipaedocommunionism of Holy Scripture and of the Early-Patristic Church was later revived at the time of the Waldensian and Wycliffeian Pre-Reformation. It was tenaciously defended also and indeed especially at the time of the Protestant Reformation - by Luther and Calvin and all of the Reformational Fathers and Confessions. Out of stalwart loyalty to Holy Scripture and the Early-Patristic Church - we too should do exactly the same.

## **CH. 8: PAGAN PAEDOCOMMUNIONISM INVADES THE LATE-PATRISTIC CHURCH**

Previously, we noted the very-revered A.D. 180 Early Church Father Irenaeus's **revulsion** in relation to **the Pagan Marcus's wine-cups**. And in our last chapter, we saw that the A.D. 251 Early Church Father Cyprian **disapprovingly mentions** the occurrence of the "**crime**" of breadlessly 'exorcizing' a demon from a wine-resisting infant by **force-feeding her communion wine** - after **Pagan Magistrates** had given her a mixture of bread and wine priorly dedicated to **idols**.

In this chapter, we shall trace the subsequent advance of the infiltration of Pagan Paedocommunionism into certain ecclesiastical circles. That increased, from a trickle to a torrent - even while **most** Christian Theologians for the **next two centuries** **still** continued to **disapprove** of ecclesiastical **Paedocommunion** without adequate **prior catechization**.

Here we shall sketch the **downgrade** toward increasing Paedocommunionism also in the Church, after Cyprian's time and especially from about a century later - even while there was **no** Christian **approval** of Paedocommunion at all between the times of Cyprian till well after Nicea. Indeed, the famous Church Councils of Eliberis (A.D. 305), Ancyra (314), and Neocaesarea (315) **all** exhibit an **antipaedocommunionistic thrust**. Moreover, also the epoch-making decisions of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea (325) had **pre-eucharizing catechetical implications**.

Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff is emphatic about the catechetical instruction of the Patristic Church. Also the *Apostolic Constitutions* (325f A.D.) were strong on catechetical requirements, and they end up prescribing **three years** of catechism before first eucharizing. Even the 343f A.D. Synod of Laodicea has references to **catechizing catechumens**. Indeed, all attempts of the Anti-Puritan Bingham and the modern Paedocommunionists Tommy Lee and Chris Keidel to rewrite Early Church History on this point - are to no avail.

Some, thus the modern High-Anglican Paedocommunionist David Holeton, allege - from their extremely tenuous (mis)interpretation of archaeology, that infant intinction was administered to the dying Julia Florentina around A.D. 337. Yet, around 350 A.D., Cyril of Jerusalem was very emphatic about the need of catechizing before eucharizing.

So too, around 367, Athanasius insisted on catechetical instruction before one's 'First Communion' at the Lord's Supper. Indeed, also the 381 A.D. Synod of Constantinople emphasized the need first to pre-catechize or re-catechize even adult Heretics - before admitting them to the Holy Table in the churches of the orthodox.

Gregory of Nyssa and Ambrose of Milan both taught the need to pre-catechize all who would eucharize for the first time. Chrysostom insisted that only the catechized are to commune. And also the A.D. 417 Augustine, in spite of his sacramentalism, was adamant about pre-catechizing all would-be Communicants.

### **529. The downgrade toward increasing Paedocommunion after Cyprian's time**

Yet from the time of Cyprian onward, pagan and neo-pagan influences infiltrated even the

Christian Church. Slowly yet increasingly, such now started corrupting even the ecclesiastical Sacraments - during Mid-Patristic and Late-Patristic times.

This occurred also in the West. But the Eastern Church was even more exposed to pagan corruptions from the Orient. Such is to be seen especially in the Grecian rites, which clearly exhibit the Paedocommunionism derived from Pre-Christian Pagan-Greek and also from Pre-Christian Pagan-Oriental Mystery Religions.

Yet, as noted in its article on *The Lord's Supper*, the 1951 *Encyclopedia Americana* says<sup>1563</sup> that even "after the third century..., the Lord's Supper was...celebrated separately in the churches in such a way that all present could partake - with the exception of Catechumens... **These** were obliged to withdraw, when the celebration of the Lord's Supper commenced - because Communion was considered a 'mysterious' act which was to be withheld from 'profane' eyes....

"It was believed to possess a peculiar efficacy, and ideas of the 'awful' and 'mystical' were associated with it.... [Third- and fourth- and especially fifth-century] Christians ascribed supernatural power to the rite, and the consecrated bread and wine were regarded as more than mere bread and wine." Pagan Magic was now progressively polluting the Christian Sacraments!

Thus, after the 251 A.D. Cyprian, the ancient practice by some Pagans of infant participation in the magical mystery meals - increasingly infiltrated even the churches. It began to extend its infection especially into the doctrinally-declining Christian Church of the Mid-Patristic Age.

At first, however, it spread only slowly within Christianity. Initially, it was long resisted there, and rightly regarded as a non-apostolic innovation then trying to infiltrate the Church.

Indeed, even a century after Cyprian, by about 350 A.D., even the (now) so-called *Apostolic Constitutions* hardly reflect such a practice. For they permit eucharizing apparently only after prior catechization, and solely long after toddlerhood because only subsequent to at least three years of catechetical instruction.

It is clear, however, that - after yet another century (by 450 A.D.) - the Proto-Pagan (and Neo-Judaic) practice of Paedocommunion was becoming rather widespread also in the Church. It then ranged itself over against the now-declining ancient (or Old Testament) and apostolic (or New Testament) and indeed also Early-Patristic practice of 'Communion only after Catechism' (and not before adolescence).

Thereafter, the paganizing custom of Communion for all baptized yet uncatechized infants among the Eastern-'Orthodox' was fast spreading throughout the body of the Early-Mediaeval Oriental Churches. So too was the rather less obnoxious custom of eucharizing all post-infantile catechized pre-adolescent children in the West. That, however, would create an aberration - necessitating the Pre-Reformation and the Protestant Reformation as its correctives.

### **530. No Christian approval of Paedocommunion between the times of Cyprian and Diocletian**

After the A.D. 251 Cyprian and until well after the A.D. 325 Council of Nicea, one is hard pressed to find any examples of ecclesiastical Paedocommunion. This is so, even in spite of the problems caused by the excommunication of the Lapsed during the persecutions of Christians launched by the Pagan Roman Emperors Decius (A.D. 250-251) and Diocletian (303-305) - and further caused by the later desires of some of the Lapsed to get re-communicated.

Yet notwithstanding this, most Theologians for even as long as almost two centuries after Cyprian - just like Cyprian himself - continued to disapprove of the pernicious pagan practice of Paedocommunionism. We now give several examples of this.

The 260 A.D. Dionysius of Alexandria,<sup>1564</sup> whom the later Jerome says formerly "had charge of the Catechetical School under Heraclas..., was the most distinguished pupil of Origen."<sup>1565</sup> In his *Fifth Epistle*, Dionysius very significantly discusses "questions and answers" asked of and received from Catechumens.

These "questions and answers," explained Dionysius, are given prior to the Catechumens' first or "'Long Communion' ...of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>1566</sup> Here, the parallel with Exodus 12:26-28 & Proverbs 22:6 & Luke 2:41-47 is obvious.

Traces of the same are found also in the *circa* A.D. 270 *Paschal Canon* of Anatolius of Alexandria. There,<sup>1567</sup> in that eucharistic writing, he cites specifically from Exodus 12:15 and 12:18f in relation to when it is and also to who it is and what it is (and what it is not) "permissible to celebrate [in] the Passover...."

"All the saints" - observes Anatolius - "should keep the solemn Festival of the Lord's resurrection within the limits which we have set forth." Clearly, those "limits" seem to exclude eucharizing by infants and toddlers.

Again, around A.D. 290, Peter of Alexandria recalled<sup>1568</sup> that with "the blessed Paul: 'The Passover is to be celebrated' [Exodus 12:2 *cf.* First Corinthians 5:7].... When the new seeds have sprung up, they are thoroughly purged and borne into the threshing floor."

Here, note Peter of Alexandria's words "celebrated" and "new seeds" and "have sprung up" and "purged." Communicants had to know what was being "celebrated." So, before "new seeds" alias covenant children could co-celebrate as Communicants, they would first need not only to "have sprung up" and grown toward maturity - but also to have been "purged" by catechization.

Why? Because, continues Peter of Alexandria, "'even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us' [First Corinthians 5:7] - and not as some who, carried along by ignorance, confidently affirm that after He had eaten the Passover He was betrayed.... As I have said, He Himself as the true Lamb was sacrificed for us in the Feast of the typical Passover on the day of the preparation, the fourteenth of the first lunar month." *Cf.* Exodus 12:3-6f. Again, the "ignorance" of infants and toddlers would here again exclude them from both the Passover and the Lord's Supper.

Similarly, also the 300 A.D. Christian Theologian Victorinus of Pettau in Pannonia near

Vienna advocated the Pre-250 A.D. orthodox practice of 'Adult Communion' exclusively. Even in his own life, after his own conversion, he was first admitted as a "*Catechumenus*." Then he was **instructed** in "the six points of catechetical doctrine mentioned in Hebrews 6:1-2."

Later, he graduated from the Catechism Class - after successfully "submitting himself to **examination**." Then, having confessed Christ and renounced Satan, he was admitted as a Communicant Member to the Lord's Table.<sup>1569</sup>

### **531. Antipaedocommunionistic thrusts of Councils of Eliberis, Ancyra, and Neocaesarea**

Great eucharistic problems were caused by the excommunication of Church Members who lapsed during the A.D. 303-305 persecution of Christians under the last Pagan Roman Emperor Diocletian. Even greater problems were caused after the end of that persecution - when deciding what to do with such of the lapsed who, during the subsequent time of safety, now applied to the Church to be re-communicated there.

The A.D. 305 Council of Eliberis in Spain decreed **two years' trial** even for **new** converts, before being able to become Communicants.<sup>1570</sup> And Canon IV of the A.D. 314 Council of Ancyra decreed: "Concerning those who have been forced to sacrifice [to idols during the Diocletian Persecution] and who in addition have partaken of feasts in honour of the idols..., it is decreed that all such be 'Hearers' for one year, and 'Prostrators' for **three years**...and then return to full communion."<sup>1571</sup>

As Rev. Dr. Henry R. Percival explains,<sup>1572</sup> those Catechumens "who heard the Word of God...were called 'Hearers' (*Audientes*). Others," however, "were of **long** standing" - receiving catechetical instruction for at least three years. They, once "properly trained in the faith..., were called *Competentes*" - because they were then deemed 'competent' to apply for Communicant Membership (and to become *Fideles* or 'Faithful Communicants' after their public 'Profession of Faith' followed immediately by their 'Confirmation' as Communicants and their 'Admission' to the Holy Table).

"After these stages had been traversed, each with its appropriate instruction, the **Catechumens** gave in their names.... The instruction, carried on through the whole of that period, was fuller and more public....

"To Catechumens in this stage - the great articles of the [*Apostles*'] *Creed*, the nature of the Sacraments, the penitential **discipline** [or **teaching**] of the Church were explained [as in the *Catechetical Lectures* of Cyril of Jerusalem] with dogmatic precision. **Special examinations** and inquiries into character were made." First Corinthians 11:23-27 *cf.* Second Timothy 3:14-17 & 1:5-6 with First Timothy 6:12-21 and Hebrews 5:12 to 6:2.

Canon V of the Council of Ancyra even adds: "Let them be 'Prostrators' [for] two years, and in the third year let them communicate without oblation [alias be present but not manducating at the Eucharist] - so that in the fourth year they may be received into full communion." Hefele explains in his famous work *History of the Councils*: "Those who cannot present their offerings

during the sacrifice, are excluded from the communion. The complete meaning of the canon is: 'They may be **present** at divine service, but may **neither** offer nor **communicate** with the "Faithful" [alias the Communicants].'"<sup>1573</sup>

Canon VI further adds: "Concerning those who had yielded [to idolatry] merely upon threat of penalties and of the confiscation of their goods or of banishment and had sacrificed [to idols] and who till this present time have not repented nor been converted but who now at the time of this Synod have 'approached' [*cf.* Exodus 12:48] with a purpose of conversion - it is decreed that they be received as 'Hearers' till the 'Great Day'; and that after the 'Great Day' they be 'Prostrators' for **three years**, and for two years more communicate without oblation, and then come to full communion so as to complete the period of six full years."

Similarly, in Canons V*f* of the A.D. 315 Council of Neocaesarea, it was decreed:<sup>1574</sup> "If a **Catechumen** coming into the Church has taken his place in the order of Catechumens, but fall into sin - let him...become a 'Hearer' and sin no more. But should he again sin while a 'Hearer' - let him be cast out!"

Here, it is noted by van Espen in his *Tractatus Historicus exhibens scholia in omnes canones conciliorum*<sup>1575</sup> "that in the **first ages** of the Church, **Catechumens** were **examined** concerning their **faith**...and were made **publicly** to **confess** [or to **profess**] and to renounce openly the pomps of the world.... These confessions **could not** be made by those still shut up in their parent's womb."

James B. Jordan and all other Uterocommunionists - note well van Espen's words! Note further, all Paedocommunionists of every ilk! For "those still shut up in their parent's womb" **cannot** "profess" their faith. Nor can postnatal but still-speechless infants. Indeed, even unbackslidden toddlers can hardly "renounce openly the pomps of the world"!

### **532. The catechetical decisions of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea (A.D. 325)**

Under the rule of Constantine as the first Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire, many abuses were rectified. Germane here was the pivotally-important and world-famous Council of Nicea, which met in 325.

In its Canon II, it states<sup>1576</sup> that during the Diocletian Persecution of Christians before Constantine's accession and thereafter till A.D. 325, "many things have been done contrary to the ecclesiastical canon.... Men just converted from Heathenism to the [Christian] Faith...had been **instructed** but a **little**....

"It has seemed right to us that for the time to come, **no** such thing shall be done. For to the **Catechumen** himself there is **need of time** and of a **longer trial after** Baptism" - namely before his subsequent admission to manducation at the Eucharist.

On its Canon XI, Rev. Dr. Henry Percival remarks<sup>1577</sup> that a "class of Penitents...were called *Sunestootes* [or] *Consistentes*; that is, 'Co-Standers' - because they were allowed to stand with the 'Faithful' [alias the Communicants], and to remain and hear the prayers of the Church **after** the



**Catechumens** and the other Penitents were dismissed, and to be present while the 'Faithful' offered and communicated, [al]though they [the 'Co-Standers'] might not themselves...partake of the Holy Communion.... The practice of...'non-communicating attendance' clearly had its origin in this stage of discipline" or discipling alias making of Disciples.

Indeed, the Council of Nicea was still urging<sup>1578</sup> - as previously had also Cyprian of Carthage and Hippolytus of Portus and Clement of Alexandria<sup>1579</sup> and Cyprian of Carthage<sup>1580</sup> as well as the earlier Pre-Christian Hebrew tract *Aboth*<sup>1581</sup> and therefore also of later Presbyterian<sup>1582</sup> and Reformed practice<sup>1583</sup> - that the Catechumens were to "have passed **three years...as 'Hearers'**" or *Audientes*, before being permitted to become *Competentes*. Canon 14 states: "Concerning **Catechumens** who had lapsed, the holy and great Synod has decreed that, after they have **passed three years** only as 'Hearers' - they shall pray with the Catechumens" [who had not lapsed] before there could be any question of their admission to manducate at the Eucharist.

Canon 13 of the Council of Nicea speaks "concerning the departing," that if any man be at the point of death he must not be deprived of the last and most indispensable *Viaticum*. But if any one who had received the communion when his life was despaired of, should be restored to health again - let him remain among those who communicate in prayers only.<sup>1584</sup>

This clearly shows that Nicea believed some Christians could and should 'communicate' with God in prayers, while attending eucharistic services, yet without themselves eucharizing there. Non-eucharizing Christian children who pray while present during such services, are another good example of this latter non-eucharistic form of Communion.

Let us further hear, on Nicea, the greatest-ever Church Historian of Ante-Nicene Christianity - who was himself contemporary to Nicea. Like the later Protestants, he too insisted on **no admission to the Eucharist without prior catechization**.

We refer, of course, to the great 'Father of Church History' - Eusebius of Caesarea. He died *circa* 339 A.D.

Significantly, even more than a century later, he was still quoted as being normative even then - *viz.* by the later Church Historian Socrates Scholasticus (A.D. 440). Socrates then wrote:<sup>1585</sup>

"What was written by Eusebius, was as follows, in his own words: 'You have probably had some intimation...of the transactions of the Great Council convened at Nicea..... We have deemed it necessary to submit...in the first place an exposition of the Faith.... We received it from the Overseers who preceded us both in our **instruction** (or *katecheesei*) [in the **knowledge** of the truth]...as we ourselves too have **learned** it from the Sacred Scriptures.... It is:

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of light, Life of life, the only-begotten Son, born before all creation, begotten by God the Father before all ages, by Whom also all things were made. He, on account of our salvation, became incarnate - and lived among men. He suffered and rose again on the third day and ascended to the Father, and shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. We believe also in one Holy Spirit.

"We believe in the existence and subsistence of Each of these.... The Father is truly Father, the Son truly Son, and the Holy Spirit truly Holy Spirit - even as our Lord also, when He sent forth His Disciples to preach the Gospel, said 'Go and disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!'

"Concerning these **doctrines**, we steadfastly maintain their truth and avow our full confidence in them. Such also have been our sentiments hitherto. And such we shall continue to hold until death. And in an unshaken adherence to this faith, we anathematize every impious heresy.

"In the presence of God Almighty and of our Lord Jesus Christ, we testify that thus we have **believed** and **thought** from our heart and soul since we have possessed a right estimate of ourselves.... We now **think** and **speak** what is perfectly in accordance with the truth. We are, moreover, prepared to **prove** to you by undeniable **evidences** and to convince you that in time past we have thus believed and so preached.'" Clearly, no infant or toddler could so profess!

### **533. The Catechumens in the Apostolic Constitutions (325f A.D.)**

Also the first portion of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which is thought to date from the first quarter of the third century,<sup>1586</sup> provides for the need of public repentance before there could be admission to the Lord's Table. In such cases,<sup>1587</sup> "life is not refused to the Heathen if they repent and cast away their unbelief. Esteem therefore everyone that is convicted of any wicked action but has not repented, as a Taxman or an Heathen [Matthew 18:17]! But if he afterward repents and turns from his error - then, receive the Heathen into the Church when they wish to repent; [receive them] indeed to hear the Word! But do not receive them to **Communion**, until they have received the seal...and are made **complete** Christians!

"So do we also permit such as these to enter only to **hear** - until they show the fruit of repentance - so that by hearing the Word, they may not utterly and irrecoverably perish. But let them **not be admitted to Communion!**... And let them **depart** after the reading of the Law and the Prophets and the Gospel - so that by such departure, they may be made better in their course of life...so that they also may **at length** be admitted!... As you receive a Heathen after you have **instructed**...him..., restore him by imposition of hands [alias **Confirmation**] among the flock, as one purified by repentance!" Hebrews 5:13 to 6:2.

This apparently applies not just to converted Heathen and lapsed backsliders, but also to covenant children themselves. For, on its way toward Proverbs 22:6 (*q.v.*), the *Apostolic Constitutions* also enjoin:<sup>1588</sup> "Be not afraid to reprove them and to teach them wisdom with severity! For your corrections will not kill them, but rather preserve them. As Solomon says... 'Chasten your son, and he will refresh you; so will you, who have good hope of him! You truly shall smite him with the rod, but shall deliver his soul from death' [Proverbs 29:17; 9:18; 23:14].

"And again, the same Solomon says thus: 'He who spares his rod, hates his son' [Proverbs

13:24]. And afterwards: 'Beat his sides whilst he is a boy, lest he become hardened and disobeys you!' [Ecclesiasticus 30:12]. He therefore who neglects to admonish and instruct his own son - hates his own child. Therefore, teach your children the Word of the Lord! Bring them under with cutting stripes, and make them subject from their childhood - teaching them the Holy Scriptures which are Christian and Divine [cf. Second Timothy 3:14f]!"

The last two chapters of the *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles* - written down in their present format around 325 to 360 A.D (from very much earlier sources)<sup>1589</sup> - tell us much about the Catechumenate. They also tell us a little about Holy Communion even for **certain** children.

As we shall see shortly here below,<sup>1590</sup> those last two chapters refer probably to the Biblical and Patristic practice of giving **three years of Catechism to ten-year-old covenant children** - in order to prepare them for Communion when thirteen. Cf.: Genesis 17:25; Exodus 12:3f,26f,37; Aboth 5:21; Luke 2:40-47. At any rate, these *Apostolic Constitutions* know nothing whatsoever about giving the Eucharist to uncatechized children - and still less about administering 'Infant-Communion' to speechless sucklings or even to weaned toddlers.<sup>1591</sup>

These *Apostolic Constitutions* rightly require masters to be kind to their slaves - and even grown-up children to be observant of their parents and to avoid murders, adulteries, fornications, perjuries, unlawful lusts, idolatries, magic, witchcraft, rapine, infanticide and abortions. Clearly, no suckling or toddler is capable of either heeding or transgressing such injunctions

The *Constitutions* rightly warn against praying "unworthily" [cf. First Corinthians 11:27-29]. In their 'Mystical Thanksgiving' for the "one loaf" - they say: "Let no one who is not initiated, eat of these things!" Further: "If anyone who is not initiated...partake of the same - 'he eats eternal damnation' [First Corinthians 11:29)].... But if anyone is a partaker through ignorance - instruct him quickly, and initiate him!" Note here the words: "instruct" and "initiate"! The *Constitutions* then continue: "Whosoever [which includes even babies and toddlers] comes to you - let him first be examined, and then received [First Corinthians 11:23-28f)! For you have understanding, and are able...to distinguish false-teachers from True Teachers....

"Let him therefore who is to be taught the truth in regard to piety, be instructed!... Let him learn...Your Laws...and the like things during the time that he is a Catechumen!... Let him learn what concerns the renunciation of the devil!"

"Let us all pray unto God for the Catechumens, that He...will mercifully hear their prayers and instruct them in His Commandments and His Ordinances...so that they may exercise themselves in His Law day and night...and cleanse them from all filthiness of the flesh.... May they obtain the forgiveness of their transgression, by their admission [as Communicants]!...

"May they thus be counted worthy of 'the holy Mysteries' and of constant Communio!... Let all the 'Faithful' [viz. the Communicants], earnestly pray for them, that the Lord will vouchsafe that, being initiated into the death of Christ, they may rise with Him..., and may be admitted to the Communion of His Mysteries!"

Public prayer was then rendered to Almighty God for the long-ago-baptized Catechumens.

"Would You now also look down upon these that have been baptized.... Bless and sanctify them, and prepare them - so that they may become 'worthy' of Your Spirit-ual gift and of the true adoption of **Your Spirit-ual Mysteries!**" (Cf. "Unworthy" in First Corinthians 11:29!)

Then "let the Deacon say: 'Go out, you that are preparing for illumination!' This is [done, so] "that they may not be any more shaken - but [soon] be admitted to the **Communion** of His most holy things!"

In the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the prayer to be rendered (by the Baptizer immediately after baptizing), sends the Baptizees on their way - toward their later admission to the second Sacrament (namely the Lord's Supper). Here, the *Constitutions* supplicate God to "look down upon these that are baptized.... Bless them and sanctify them.... Prepare them, so that they may become worthy of Your spiritual gift and...be admitted to the **Communion** of His most holy things!"<sup>1592</sup>

Note here that this is **not** a pre-baptismal but a post-baptismal prayer! It does not, like modern maverick Paedocommunionists, misassume that all Baptizees are *ipso facto* entitled manducatorily to receive also the Eucharist.

This post-baptismal prayer now asks God to "prepare" those Baptizees further, so that they may yet "become worthy" [cf. First Corinthians 11:27-29] and only then "be admitted to the **Communion**." A stronger statement against Infant-Communionism, is hard to imagine.

#### **534. Paedocommunionists Bingham and Tommy Lee twist *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII:12-13**

The maverick pro-paedocommunionistic Anti-Puritan and High-Anglican Joseph Bingham had the audacity to write<sup>1593</sup> that "it is undeniable that infants were...admitted to communicate.... Upon this account, the author of the *Constitutions* (VIII:12) in his invitation of the faithful to the Communion - bids mothers bring their children with them." And again (VIII:13) describing the order in which they communed, he said: "First let the Bishops receive; then the Presbyters, Deacons, Subdeacons, Readers, Singers, and Ascetics; among the Women, the Deaconesses, Virgins, and Widows; after that the children" *etc.* Thus Bingham.

Here, the pro-paedocommunionistic Bingham ignored several very important points. For he here neglected to draw attention to at least four important matters.

1, most writers (both ancient and modern) **do** deny what he bigotedly declared to be "undeniable" - *viz* "that infants were...admitted to communicate." 2, the relevant part of the *Constitutions* (VIII:12) merely "bids mothers receive their children" at the Lord's Table; it does **not** state that such totally-uncatechized or incompetently-catechized children small and large then themselves eucharized or should eucharize. 3, the age of the competently-catechized "children" who then did communicate, is not stated in VIII:13 - so that one should not assume that such children were still infants or toddlers or pre-adolescents, nor that they had never been catechized so as to become competent manducators at the Lord's Table. And 4, that VIII:15 (here suppressed by Bingham) then goes on to speak of first bringing infants to "complete age" and **then**

"**confirm[ing]**" those "admitted" after "instruct[ing] the Catechumens and render[ing] them worthy of admission." Yes, "**worthy** of admission" - cf. First Corinthians 11:27!

Also the modern Paedocommunionist Tommy Lee himself 'Binghamesquely' attempts to get some mileage from these passages. For Tommy Lee argues<sup>1594</sup> that the *Constitutions'* words "Let the mothers receive their children!" - implies that the latter included infants and toddlers and further implies that all such actually manducated at the Lord's Table (which is nowhere stated). Tommy Lee also argues that the *Constitutions'* words "Let the Bishops partake, then the Presbyters, and...then...the women...and...then the children!" - implies that those partaking children included also uncatechized toddlers (which the *Constitutions* themselves do not state).

Indeed, Tommy Lee bizarrely even argues that the *Constitutions'* words "bring the infants to complete age" indicate their eucharistic manducation while still uncatechized infants! However, the *Constitutions'* actual words are: "bring the infants to complete age [meaning the adolescent age of admission to the Eucharist]; confirm the newly-admitted [implying that the previously-mentioned infants had not yet so been admitted]; and instruct the Catechumens, and render them **worthy** of admission" [thus clearly implying that uninstructable infants and toddlers are **not yet** "worthy of admission" as per First Corinthians 11:27-29].

*O mores; o tempora!* Like Cicero asked Cataline, we too would ask Tommy Lee: "How much longer would you test our patience?!"

Let us now take a fuller look at the two passages Bingham and Tommy Lee misquoted here - *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII:12 & 13. Thereafter, let us look especially at VIII:15, about which both Bingham and Tommy Lee are totally silent. For thus, a very different picture will then unfold to our scrutiny.

### **535. The Constitutions: three years of Catechism before Communion**

Right before the Communion Services themselves, the *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII:2:12 teach that the Deacon said: "Let none of the Catechumens...stay here!... You who prayed the foregoing prayer - **depart!**" For here, rightly or wrongly, no other non-communicating persons [except such non-manducating infants then still in their manducating mothers' arms] were permitted even to stay during the eucharistic action itself.

Indeed, after the exodus from the Worship Service of the above-mentioned Catechumens, the Presbyter himself would then pray to the Lord. He would say: "We beseech You for the Catechumens of the Church..., [so] that You will perfect the[m]...in the Faith" *etc.*

Only thereafter, do we read: "Let the Bishop partake; then the Presbyters and Deacons...; then the children; and then all the people in order..., both men and women!" There, "the children" obviously refers to the there-present post-catechetical (adolescent) offspring of the Church - and not at all to the never-catechized yet there-present but non-communicating infants-in-arms (nor of course to the never-catechized absent and non-communicating toddlers).

We reject, then, any sacramentalistic misinterpretation of anything above which would equate the forgiveness of sin with admission to the Eucharist. Nevertheless, let us look more closely at the last sentence just quoted from the *Constitutions*. It clearly states, in respect of the Lord's Supper: "Let the Bishop partake; then the Presbyters and Deacons...; then the children; and then all the people..., both men and women!"

Here, "the children" certainly excludes 'Infant-Intinction' for sucklings. For the Communion of the *Constitutions* is here stated to involve an active **partaking** - by the Clergy; by "the children"; and by adults. "Let the Bishop partake...; then the children; and then...both men and women!" Here, the phrase "the children" clearly means only such young people as had [like the co-mentioned "Bishop" and like the co-mentioned "men and women"] - themselves been both catechized and confirmed.

Note that the last clause of the 'Holy Communion' phrase above, refers to "both men and women" - and not to 'all males and females regardless of age' *etc.* It implies maturity in the Communicants. For, right after the section on the Communion Service, these same *Apostolic Constitutions* (at VIII:15) further declare that God was to be petitioned: "Bring [or educate] the infants to complete age [alias maturity]! **Instruct the Catechumens**, and render them **worthy of admission!**" *Cf.* First Corinthians 11:27f. And finally, in *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII:32: "Let him who is to be a Catechumen, be a Catechumen for three years."<sup>1595</sup> *Cf.* the historic catechizing of covenant seed from their 10th till their 13th years of age - in the Talmud (*Aboth* 5:21); the Bible (Proverbs 22:6 & Luke 2:40-47f), and in Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, and Cyprian *etc!*

**Howsoever** some might try to interpret these above statements ("Instruct the Catechumens!" and "Let him...be a Catechumen for three years!") - they **clearly exclude giving Holy Communion to small children**. The references are no doubt to the well-known traditional three years of Catechism - *viz.*, when ten-year-old covenant children were catechized with a view to their admission to the Table soon after turning thirteen. Genesis 17:25; Exodus 12:3f,26f; Proverbs 22:6; Luke 2:40-47; Galatians 1:15-18.

For earlier, before these *Apostolic Constitutions*, also the great Clement of Alexandria and Hippolytus of Pontus spoke of such three-years-long Catechism.<sup>1596</sup> And Cyprian of Carthage recommended three full years of recatechetical rehabilitation for the Lapsed.<sup>1597</sup> So too did the Councils of Ancyra<sup>1598</sup> and Nicea.<sup>1599</sup> Compare also the (perhaps 150f B.C.) Intertestamental Talmudic tract *Aboth* 5:21 - from age ten to thirteen. So too, later, it seems, did Calvin (and Knox and Kuyper *etc.*) - **commencing** around age **ten** and finishing not before the attainment of age **thirteen**.<sup>1600</sup>

### **536. The alleged infant intinction of the dying Julia Florentina around A.D. 337**

However, occasional 'Child Communion' but not 'Infant-Intinction' now seems (either accidentally or deliberately and unconsciously or consciously) to have started getting practised by some of the semi-repaganizing groups of Christians here and there - some time after the A.D. 325 Council of Nicea. Thus the antipaedocommunionistic Lutheran Rev. Professor Dr. Joachim

Jeremias has drawn attention to perhaps the very first evidence of the then-ecclesiastically-novel yet nevertheless essentially-pagan practice of Paedocommunion only then starting to infiltrate the then-syncretizing and slowly-repaganizing mainline Christian Church in Post-Nicene times.

The evidence, however, is purely archaeological and extremely problematic. As Jeremias records:<sup>1601</sup>

"In the time before 337, belongs a Sicilian inscription reporting of a tiny little girl Julia Florentina that, when she started to die at the age of 18 months 22 days - she at 2 a.m. received 'Emergency Baptism.' Even though she would still live for another four hours - "*consueta repeterit.*"

Now what exactly do the last two Latin words of that inscription mean? Answers Rev. Professor Dr. Jeremias: "In this expression, which only means 'custom shall have resumed' - the word *consueta* is alleged by some to be a secret indication of the Eucharist." According to that allegation: "The tiny little girl thus, after Emergency Baptism, and once again shortly before death - received Communion."

In actual fact, however, the inscription may only be claiming that the dying little girl was baptized according to custom - whether such custom then in vogue (or then just coming into vogue) was good or bad. In that case, the inscription would be saying nothing at all about her then possibly also eucharizing (or more probably then not eucharizing).

In regard to the extremely tenuous interpretation that the above inscription might be referring to the eucharizing of that dying child - the modern High-Anglican Paedocommunionist David Holeton has stated<sup>1602</sup> not only that "Julia Florentina died aged 18 months 22 days, having received Emergency Baptism at 2.a.m." But Holeton has immediately thereafter gone on to pontificate that "because she did not die immediately after her Baptism, she was given the Eucharist again four hours later" right before she died.

Yet very significantly, even Holeton then goes on to admit: "Here...one has a text" which is convincing "only if you accept the oblique reference to the Sacrament (*ita ut consueta repeterit*) - and if you accept the Baptism and Communion of an infant *in extremis* [as] having something to do with the normal sacramental life of the Church. If you are convinced by this sort of text, then you have grounds from which the later more-readily-documented practice has obviously grown. If not, you are in the company of a goodly number from the past who see the whole practice as dating from the time of Cyprian" rather than from the Post-Nicene time of Julia Florentina.

This is quite a concession for a Paedocommunionist to make! Of course, we ourselves would deny that eucharizing children was part of "the normal sacramental life of the Church" either in the A.D. 250 time of Cyprian or in the A.D. *circa* 337 time of Julia Florentina - even though we concede that Paedocommunion had certainly long been the practice of Pagans; and, possibly by A.D. 337 and certainly within the next century, also of Syncretists.

Yet we must also insist against Holeton that there is no extant Cyprianic writing either approvingly or even disapprovingly describing any practice of eucharizing dying infants. For the

earliest extant and only possible "evidence"(?! ) of ecclesiastical Paedocommunion to date, is the above statement anent Julia Florentina from almost the middle of the fourth century.

We say that this is the only **possible** "evidence"(?! ) of ecclesiastical Paedocommunion at that time. For it is surely not **certain** evidence, even according to the Paedocommunionist Holeyton. In fact, it is hardly such evidence at all. For that clearly infant-baptistic inscription could only very questionably and obliquely also have anything whatsoever to say about the ecclesiastical eucharizing s of infants and toddlers and especially of older children that were certainly being practised on some sort of scale only a hundred years later.

### **537. The 343f A.D. Synod of Laodicea on Catechism and Catechumens**

Clearly, there is no room at all for Paedocommunion in the Church Councils of Eliberis (305), Ancyra (314), and Neocaesarea (315). Neither is there any room for Paedocommunion in the catechetical decisions of the 325 First Ecumenical Council of Nicea and its concomitant *Creed of Eusebius* - nor in the *Apostolic Constitutions* (325f). Neither is there in the Canons of the 343f A.D. Synod of Laodicea, to which we now turn.

For Canon XIX of the Synod of Laodicea says:<sup>1603</sup> "After the sermons of the Bishops, the prayer for the Catechumens is to be made first by itself. And after the **Catechumens have gone out**...there should be offered the three prayers of the Faithful [*viz.* the Communicants].... And it is lawful to the Presbyterhood alone to go to the altar and [there] **communicate**."

In his *Origines du Culte Chrétien*, Duchesne declares:<sup>1604</sup> "After the sermon, the sending out of the different categories of persons who should not assist at the holy Mysteries [or the Sacrament of the Eucharist] takes place. First of all, the **Catechumens**. Upon the invitation of the Deacon, they make a prayer in silence, while the Congregation prays for them.

"The Deacon gives the outline of this prayer by detailing the intentions and the things to be prayed for. The Faithful [Communicants] answer, and [also] especially the children by the supplication *Kyrie eleison*. Then the **Catechumens** rise up, and the Deacon asks them to join with him in the prayers which he pronounces. Next he makes them bow before the Bishop, to receive his benediction, after which he sends them home.

"The same form is used for the Energumens, for the *Competentes* [who are preparing themselves toward the reception of the Sacrament which they have still not yet received]..., and last of all for the 'Penitents'.... Only the faithful Communicants remain there in the church."

Rev. Theo Danzfuss states the same, in his 1998 doctoral dissertation *Child Communion - Reformation or Deformation?* "It is clear," argues Danzfuss,<sup>1605</sup> "that the Catechumens and the Candidates for Baptism were not admitted to the Lord's Supper, even though they were no longer regarded as unbelievers....

"They first had to become better prepared, before they could gain admission to the Sacrament.... The 'Penitents' were already welcomed in the Congregation; they were already



baptized; and thus Members.... But nevertheless, they still had to leave the church [building] before the Lord's Supper" was celebrated.

Canons 45 and 46 of the 343<sup>f</sup> Council of Laodicea decree that "Candidates" for Communicant Church Membership "must learn the Faith [or] Creed by heart, and recite it...to the Presbyters alias the Session of [Elders]." <sup>1606</sup> Without doubt, this has always been the practice of Presbyterians - whether in Biblical, Ante-Nicene, Post-Nicene, Reformational, or Post-Reformational times. Only during Mediaeval times when Presbyterianism was temporarily eclipsed, was such practice discontinued.

Here, Van Espen comments <sup>1607</sup> that "such of the Gentiles [or Heathen] as desired...to be baptized, at first were privately instructed by the **Catechists**. After this, having acquired some knowledge of the Christian Religion - they were admitted to the public instructions given by the Bishop [or Overseer] in the church. And they were therefore called *Audientes* and, for the first time properly-speaking, *Catechumens*. But when these Catechumens had been kept in this rank a sufficient time and had been there tried [or tested alias examined], they were allowed to go up to the higher grace." With this, cf. Exodus 12:26-37; Proverbs 22:6; Luke 2:42-49; and First Corinthians 11:23-28<sup>f</sup>.

Thus, the general norm in the raising of covenantal children still seems to have been: enrolment as *Audientes* at age 10; and, after becoming *Competentes* over the next three years, graduation as *Fideles* after turning age 13. As it was in Exodus twelve at the beginning; is now, in the A.D. 265-339 time of Eusebius; and would be later still, in the days of Calvin. <sup>1608</sup> Catechizing ere Communion! World without end. Amen.

### **538. Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff on Catechetical Instruction in the Patristic Church**

Writes Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff in his famous volumes on *The Creeds of Christendom*: <sup>1609</sup> "Religious instruction preparatory to admission to Church Membership is as **old as Christianity** itself.... Catechetical instruction began to be **imparted to baptized** Christians, and served as a **preparation** for Confirmation or the **First Communion**."

"It consisted chiefly of the **committal** and **explanation** (1) of the **Ten Commandments**; (2) of **the Creed** (the *Apostles' Creed* in the Latin, the *Nicene Creed* in the Greek Church), sometimes also of the *Athanasian Creed* and the *Te Deum*; [and] (3) of **the Lord's Prayer** (*Paternoster*).... **Catechetical manuals were prepared.**"

No infant or toddler could meet such standards! Significantly, the above-mentioned pattern of the practice of the Early Church - which was relaxed in the Middle Ages - was restored at the Protestant Reformation both in Lutheranism and in Calvinism.

### **539. Keidel's paedocommunionistic rewriting of the History of the Early Church**

The modern Paedocommunionist Keidel quite wrongly regards 'Infant-Communion' and even

‘Child-Communion’ as Apostolic practices. Says he: "Why not let baptized infants and children back into the Lord’s Supper?" For "infant observance of the Lord’s Supper was widespread in the early Church."<sup>1610</sup>

However, Keidel gives no Apostolic nor even any Primitive-Patristic evidences whatsoever to support this sweeping statement. All he gives us, is his own unproven claim that there is "clear evidence from Exodus twelve that infants partook of the Passover Feast" - a claim that we have earlier disproved above. Indeed, his earliest Church-Historical references - are only to "Cyprian in 251" A.D.; and to someone whom Keidel terms "St. Clement."

By this "St. Clement," Keidel’s footnote refers us to the 325f A.D. so-called *Apostolic Constitutions* (VIII:12-13). This, of course, is neither the first-century (A.D.) Clement of Rome nor the second-century (A.D.) Clement of Alexandria at all.

Indeed, even if it could be manipulated to attempt to refer to any "Clement" whatsoever - it could not be targeted on the two lattermost writers mentioned above. Then, it could be targeted only on the mid-fourth-century (A.D.) Pseudo-Clement, or even Pseudo-Ignatius (thus Harnack).

For the *First Epistle* of the first-century Clement (of Rome) to the Corinthians implies anything but Paedocommunionism.<sup>1611</sup> Furthermore, the Holy Communion references in the extant writings of the other Clement - the second-century Clement (of Alexandria) - all very clearly discourage ‘Child-Communion’ (also and precisely because they demand prior catechizing).

Yet even some of the fourth-century A.D.’s *Pseudo-Clementina* or the so-called *Clementine Homilies* militate against the Paedocommunionist Keidel’s assessment! Thus, for example, see the so-called *Epistle of Clement to James* (allegedly the half-brother even of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself).

There, it was enjoined:<sup>1612</sup> "Let the Catechists instruct, after having [themselves] first been instructed. For it is a work relating to the souls of men. For the Teacher of the Word must accommodate himself to the various judgments of the learners.

"The Catechists must therefore be learned and unblameable, of much experience and approved." For only an instructed Catechist could himself be able to instruct Catechumens to become learned.

Nor do the *Apostolic Constitutions* (sometimes themselves attributed to ‘Clement’) establish either ‘Infant-Communion’ or ‘Toddler-Communion.’ For they know of Holy Communion for only those children who are older - namely after those children, just like men and women who become Communicants, had first been catechized for fully three years.

#### **540. The 350 A.D. Cyril of Jerusalem on catechizing ere eucharizing**

Perhaps the greatest Catechete of all time, was Cyril of Jerusalem (350 A.D.). Concerning Cyril, the great Jerome said (after 400 A.D.):<sup>1613</sup> "Certain *Catechetical Lectures* of his, composed

while he was a young man, are extant."

Twenty-three of these *Lectures* have come down to us - eighteen for the 'chosen ones' (on the fundamentals of the faith), and five mystagogical 'Catechism Lessons' (on Baptism, Confirmation and Communion). Here, the 'Infant-Baptism' of covenant children had ever-increasingly become the catechetical point of departure.<sup>1614</sup>

Indeed, one of these *Catechetical Lectures* is devoted to the need of thorough repentance from all past sins; another, to the need of 'Confession [of Faith].' Hence,<sup>1495</sup> after the renunciation of sin - there follows the '*Profession of Faith*' (in which the Candidate recites an abbreviated version of the *Apostles' Creed*).<sup>1496</sup> This, in turn, is then followed by the new Communicant's first participation at Holy Communion.<sup>1497</sup>

In Cyril's *Procatechesis* or *Prologue* to the *Catechetical Lectures*, he reminds the Catechumens of the dignity Jesus is giving them. Indeed, Cyril even urges them to "hasten to the catechizings" and to "**attend closely**" to them - lest their "**mind** be wearied out!"

He also warns them, as Adolescents or those then approaching puberty, to be particularly vigilant against sexual sins. He urges: "**Strip off, I beg, fornication** and uncleanness - and put on that brilliant robe, **self-discipline**...."

"**You were called 'Catechumen'** - which means **one into whom something is dinned** from without.... You heard of some **hope**.... **You heard about 'Mysteries' [alias Sacraments]**.... You heard **Scriptures**."<sup>1618</sup>

Clearly, none of the above is suitable to babies, to toddlers, or to young children. It is suitable only to those with a good attention span and capable of knowing what fornication is.

This *Procatechesis* was, however, not just for heathen Catechumens. It was also for infantly-baptized covenant children who were being prepared for the Lord's Table precisely at the time they were attaining their youth (with all its attendant temptations).

Indeed, this is evident also from the closing words of the *Procatechesis* - addressed to the Leader of the Catechism Class. Those closing words read as follows: "These *Catechetical Lectures* for those who are to be enlightened, you may hand to Candidates for Baptism **and to believers who are already baptized**."

Similarly, in Lecture One,<sup>1619</sup> Cyril urges all Catechumens to "**confess** 'in an acceptable time and in the day of salvation' (Second Corinthians 6:2)." Too, in Lecture Twelve, Cyril tells the Catechizer himself that "when the catechizing has taken place" - well might "a Catechumen **ask** what the Teacher has said." For "you yourself were once a Catechumen!"

Also, in Lecture Fifteen, Cyril urges that both Covenant Children and willing Pagans be catechized. There he enjoins: "If you have a child according to the flesh, admonish him!... If you have begotten one through catechizing, put him also on his guard!"<sup>1620</sup> Thus, also the proselyted convert is a 'child' - and then treated just like the 'child of the covenant' born and bred therein. Cf.

Exodus 12:45-49.

Again, Cyril's Lecture Twenty-Two<sup>1621</sup> discusses First Corinthians 11:23 and Matthew 26:26. Compare too First Corinthians 4:15 with Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata* III:1.

Cyril's Lecture Twenty-Three - on "the Sacred Liturgy and Communion" - expounds the essential Lord's Prayer for the Candidate. That was then done, just before the Candidate was confirmed and thereafter admitted to his own first manducation at Holy Communion. Thereupon the Presbyter would say at the Lord's Table: "Holy things to holy men" - yes, holy men!

Cyril then explains of such confirmed Ex-Catechumens that not just God but "we too are holy - but not by nature; only by participation and discipline" and teaching. "Trust not the judgment to your bodily palate; no, but to faith unfaltering!"

But how can confirmees thus discern and believe - unless and until they have first to an adequate extent been taught? Paedocommunionists, note well!

As also the Roman Catholic writer Professor Dr. George D. Smith rightly states in his book *The Sacrament of the Eucharist*:<sup>1622</sup> "Cyril intends expressly to instruct his Catechumens on the great Sacrament which they are shortly to receive for the first time.... So striking is the similarity between his words and the terms in which at the present day we are accustomed to prepare [older] children for their first Communion, that...I cannot refrain from quoting a few extracts: 'Since He [Christ] has said of the bread "This is My body" - who shall venture...to doubt?... By faith, be fully assured!'"

We ourselves must here agree with Professor Smith. For the moment, we leave undiscussed the very important matter as to the precise way in which Cyril construed Christ to be present at the Lord's Supper. Yet it is at least quite clear that he catechized all Candidates - before allowing any to make his or her first manducation at Holy Communion. And this very fact precludes Communion from then having been given to babies and to uncatechized small children.

The great Catechist Cyril of Jerusalem died in A.D. 386. No wonder then, that Etheria - in her own famous Travels - around A.D. 400 gives us a beautiful description of what also in her own day was still being done also a decade-and-a-half after Cyril's death in his old congregation at Jerusalem. Says Etheria: "The Overseer's chair is placed in the Great Church.... The men and the women, sit round him in a circle. There is a place where the fathers and mothers stand, and any of the people who want to listen can come in and sit down....

"His subject is God's Law.... During...forty days, he goes through the whole Bible, beginning with Genesis.... He also teaches them at this time all about the resurrection and the faith. And this is called Catechesis. After five weeks' teaching they receive the Creed, whose content he explains article by article in the same way as he explained the Scriptures....

"There has been teaching on all the Scriptures from six to nine in the morning..., three hours' catechesis a day..., which makes three hours' teaching a day for seven weeks."<sup>1623</sup>

Such was Cyril of Jerusalem - equipping Communicants not just for his own church in Jerusalem but also for the Church of the New Jerusalem. Such catechizing produced strong Communicants. The Protestant Reformation catechized still more thoroughly. But the minimalistic catechizing by today's "Evangel-lyfish" - breeds only similar jellyfish alias ignorant, inarticulate and invertebrate or spineless ecclesiastical clones and clowns.

#### 541. Athanasius on 'Catechism Before Communion' in A.D. 367

As Rev. Professor E.C. Ratcliffe states in his Encyclopaedia Britannica article<sup>1624</sup> on the Eucharist: "The development of sacrificial theories of the Eucharist is in some measure a Christian attempt to meet the pagan objection that Christians had no sacrifices and were, therefore, atheists.... Cyprian (A.D. 258) speaks of the Eucharist as an offering of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. And a century later, the eucharistic prayer of Sarapion conceives [of] the liturgical action as 'making the likeness of the death'; so being a reconciliatory sacrifice."

The great Athanasius of Alexandria - in his Festal Epistle for the year A.D. 367 - mentions the document called "The Teaching of the Apostles" alias the Didache. That document, says Athanasius - "though not indeed included in the Canon" of Scripture - was nevertheless "appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us and who wish for instruction (katecheisthai) in the Word of God."<sup>1625</sup>

Athanasius (and many of his colleagues) may well have had too sacramentalistic a view of the Eucharist. Indeed, even he apparently overlooked the full implications of Exodus 12:26 & Luke 2:41f cf. First Corinthians 11:27 & 14:20-24 - in his overzealous assumption that unconfirmed Catechumens should exit from the worship service before the celebration of Communion by the rest of the Congregation.

The motive for this fourth-century A.D. exit, was to prevent the unconfirmed Catechumens from witnessing the sacramental 'mystery' at the Communion Service which followed. This forced exiting, was quite unbiblical. Yet Athanasius nevertheless indeed rightly asserts that unconfirmed Catechumens were not to be allowed to manducate at the Holy Table.

Thus, in his Defense Against the Arians, he accordingly asks:<sup>1626</sup> "How could it be, that oblations were offered - when Catechumens were within? For if Catechumens were there present - it was not yet the time for presenting the oblations!"

Before being allowed to communicate, "Catechumens were examined" - explains Athanasius. "One...Catechumen said during his examination, that he was present" elsewhere - during a previous Communion Service. "From which it appears," concludes Athanasius, "that the 'Mysteries' [alias 'Holy Communion' rites] were never celebrated at all - when Catechumens were present."

Whatever the demerits of that rather secretive policy may be - it certainly prevented even Catechumens from manducating at the Sacrament. That had to wait till after their Confirmation, following their Profession of Faith.

Again, in his Easter Letters, Athanasius wrote<sup>1627</sup> - "It is written (First Corinthians 11:27): 'Whosoever shall eat and drink unworthily, is guilty of the death of our Lord!' Therefore, let us...purify the body! Let us not yield ourselves to excess and to lusts but occupy ourselves with divine doctrines - so that, being all together pure, we may be able to partake of the Word!...

"A deceitful man...shall assuredly, being a stranger..., be accounted unworthy to eat the Passover. For (Exodus 12:43) 'a foreigner shall not eat of it'!...

"Therefore, let us not celebrate the Feast after an earthly manner!... Let us keep the Feast, then, as Moses [did]! (Exodus chapter 12)." First Corinthians 5:7f & 11:29.

Athanasius then gave a good reason for his previous remarks. He next said: "For the Feast does not consist in pleasant intercourse at meals..., but in acknowledgment of God, and the offering of thanksgiving and of praise to Him....

"Although wicked men press forward to keep the Feast..., 'what communion has righteousness with iniquity?' [Second Corinthians 6:14].... Thus it is, that sinners and all those who are aliens...[or who are] heretics and schismatics - since they are excluded from glorifying [God] with the Sacraments - cannot properly continue observers of [alias manducators at] the Feast."

#### **542. Gregory Nazianzen implies three years' catechism is needed before eucharizing**

Gregory of Nazianze, one of the three great Cappodian Theologians, clearly defends the Infant Baptisms of covenant children. However, he also then goes on to state that the children of "others" can be baptized only after three years' catechizing. That would then apparently admit also them to the Lord's Supper.

Consequently, not a fresh (re)baptizing but indeed a similar period of catechizing for the Holy Table would thus be needed before admitting even infantly-baptized covenant children to the Lord's Supper. That would then be done at the end of their childhood.

Stated Gregory: "Some will say, in the case of those who can desire (but not request) Baptism - 'What have you to say about those who are still infants?... Are we to baptize them too?'"

To this question, Gregory himself replied:<sup>1628</sup> "Certainly! A proof of this is found in the Circumcision on the eighth day. That was a sort of typical seal, and was conferred on children.... But in respect of others [alloon]" - namely the post-infantile children of Pagans - "I give my advice to wait till the end of the third year [probably of continuous catechization], or a little more or less, when they may be able to listen and to answer something about the Sacrament."

This certainly implies that also infantly-baptized covenant children were, just like the older children of pagan parentage, first to be catechized for some three years before being manducated at the Lord's Table. For: "This is the Ordinance of the Passover. No stranger shall eat of it.... When a stranger...wants to keep the Passover to the Lord - let all his males be circumcised; and then

let him come near [= 'get catechized'?] and keep it!... One law shall be to him who is homeborn, and to the stranger who sojourns among you!" Exodus 12:43-49. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.... Let a man examine himself!.... For he who eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks condemnation to himself - not discerning the Lord's body." First Corinthians 5:7 and 11:28f.

Comment is superfluous. Gregory here seems to be asserting that admission to the Passover required three years of catechization (cf. from age ten till age thirteen, as per Aboth 5:21 in the Talmud). With the Lord's Supper having replaced the Passover at Calvary, the same applies also to the Eucharist since Easter Sunday. Acts 2:42f ; 20:6f ; First Corinthians 3:2f & 5:7f & 10:16 to 11:34 & 13:11 & 14:20 & 16:13; Galatians 1:18; Hebrews 5:12 to 6:5f & 13:10-16; etc.

#### **543. The 381 A.D. Synod of Constantinople on catechizing even heretics**

In the very famous Second Ecumenical Council (the First of Constantinople in 381 A.D.), 1629 it was decreed that never-before-baptized and anti-trinitarian Sabellian Heretics, "whenever they desire to turn to orthodoxy" - were to be received into the Church "as Heathen." Thus, "on the first day, we make them Christians; on the second, Catechumens; on the third, we exorcise them.... Thus we instruct them (katechoumen), and make them frequent the Church for a long time and listen to the Holy Scriptures; and then we baptize them" - and subsequently admit them to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Interestingly, 'First Constantinople' prescribes the same catechetical treatment also for Eunomians and Montanists. William Hammond, in his famous book *The Definitions of Faith and Canons of Discipline of the Six Oecumenical Councils*, points out that the 'tongues-speaking' Montanists had "latterly adopted the errors of Sabellius respecting the Trinity" - somewhat like today's 'Jesus-only' Pentecostals. This raises the interesting question today as to whether even Trinitarian Pentecostals and Baptists should be admitted to the Lord's Supper in a Reformed Church - until also the infants of those Pentecostals and Baptists have first been baptized. Exodus 12:43-49.

For the rest, however, continues First Constantinople, "those who turn from heresy to orthodoxy and to the portion of those who are being saved, we receive according to the following method and custom. Arians and Macedonians and Sabbatians and Novatians, who call themselves Cathari or Aristeri, and Quarto-decimans or Tetradites and Apollinarians - we receive upon their giving a written renunciation [of their errors] and anathematize every heresy which is not in accordance with the holy, catholic and apostolic Church of God.

"Thereupon, they are first sealed or anointed [or confirmed].... And when we seal them, we say, 'The Seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost!'"

Clearly, all of this means no confirmation unto admission to the Eucharist in the holy catholic and apostolic Church of God - until converts from heresy have first writtenly renounced and anathematized every heterodox heresy! This presupposes the prior completion of catechization, and totally excludes the admission of all infants and toddlers to manducation at the Eucharist.

#### **544. Gregory Nyssa and Ambrose of Milan: 'Catechize!'**

The Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, in its article on the Eucharist, tells of strange developments especially after the appearance of Gregory of Nyssa's Great Catechism.<sup>1630</sup> We next find, explains Hastings, "a succession of Church writers...based upon the language of John 6:51f" - as regards their curious and sacramentalizing doctrine of Holy Communion. Hastings continues: "In the more precise form in which it is presented..., [these new writers] exhibit...points of contact with the ideas perpetuated in the Greek mysteries."

Yet Ambrose of Milan, around that time, wrote an important catechetical work called *On the Mysteries*. This was not just for the benefit of Heathen about to be baptized. It was also for infantly-baptized covenant children - whom Ambrose says were (at a later age!) being prepared "for Confirmation and the Holy Sacrament."<sup>1631</sup>

In that regard, Ambrose has Christ saying to those confirmed into His Church: "Remember that you received the seal of the Spirit..., as you have learned in the lesson!" This is indeed a very weighty remark.

For, as the commentators Schaff and Wace observe: "This passage evidently refers to Confirmation." Accordingly, Ambrose himself then adds: "You have anointed my head with oil. Indeed, Your inebriating cup - how excellent it is!" Psalm 23:1-5."

The above shows the clear connection between one's post-catechetical earlier unction at one's Confirmation and one's later 'First Communion' or eucharizing from the intoxicating or inebriating cup." Clearly, the language is hardly appropriate for babies or even toddlers.

The commentators Schaff and Wace here further point out: "After being...confirmed..., the newly 'enlightened' were led in solemn procession into the church - to be present at the celebration of the 'Mysteries' and to receive their first Communion." For, continued Ambrose himself, "that food which you receive - that Living Bread Which came down from heaven - furnishes the substance of eternal life."<sup>1632</sup>

Again, in his Twentieth Epistle, Ambrose relates how he was "teaching the Creed to certain Candidates." As Ambrose's commentators Schaff and Wace observe,<sup>1633</sup> these 'Candidates' or Competentes were "those of the Catechumens who, having requested" further promotion within their Catechism Class, "were [next] admitted to be instructed in the Creed and the Lord's Prayer - in preparation" for and thus also for promotion to the status of Communicants thereafter.

Clearly, this language can hardly be applied to small children - and cannot be applied to speechless infants. For neither can be among those who have "requested" further promotion within the "Catechism Class" of which such requesters are already Members. And neither are capable adequately to be "instructed in the Creed and the Lord's Prayer - in preparation" for admission to the Eucharist.



Indeed, in his Thirty-third Epistle, Ambrose once wrote something very significant to his own sister. He observed: "When the other Catechumens were dismissed, I was teaching the Creed to some Competentes."

#### 545. **The Canons of Abulides of the Ancient Church in Ethiopia**

The Canons of Abulides are used by the Ethiopian Christians.<sup>1635</sup> There were published in Latin by Job Ludolphus in his 1691 *Commentaria ad Historiam Aethiopicam* (alias his *Commentaries Toward Ethiopian History*), and also by William Whiston in his 1711 *Primitive Christianity Revived*. The latter also notes that there are passages similar to Abulides's Canons treating the same matters<sup>1636</sup> - in the (apparently antipaedocommunionistic) Apostolic Constitutions (mentioned earlier above).<sup>1637</sup>

Now the Ethiopian Church had been started apparently by Queen Candace's Minister of Finance. Acts 8:27. Apparently he had been an Ethiopian proselyte to Judaism before he became a Christian. Acts 8:28-32. As a proselyte to Judaism, he had no doubt been circumcised. But, as a previously-castrated eunuch, he would thereafter never have been admitted to manducation at the Passover. Exodus 12:48f cf. Deuteronomy 23:1. However, that Ethiopian proselyte to Judaism would undoubtedly - when proselytized - previously have been catechized by a Rabbi.

Yet then, just before his subsequent Christian Baptism, he received even further catechizing - in the Christian Faith - from Philip the Evangelist. Acts 8:30-37. Thereafter, he went on his way rejoicing, back to Ethiopia. Acts 8:27-28 cf. 8:39.

Only after arrival there, could he ever have eucharized. Indeed, even then he would first have needed to have made a few converts in his land, and to have constituted the first Christian congregation there - before being able to receive the Eucharist there.

Accordingly, he would have distinguished Circumcision very clearly from subsequent manducation at the Passover. Too, he would similarly have distinguished Baptism very clearly - from thereafter manducating at the Lord's Supper only some good time after his Baptism.

All this seems to be reflected somewhat, in the later Ethiopian Church's Canons of Abulides. There, Canon 19 refers to "the Catechumen who suffers martyrdom before Baptism" and without it. Canon 28 states that "the 'Faithful' ought to eat nothing before the Holy Communion."<sup>1638</sup> Canon 30 concerns "Catechumens" (as quite distinct from the 'Faithful' alias those of the catechized who had subsequently been approved and then admitted as Communicants). And Canon 37 deals with the matter of "when an Overseer celebrates the Holy Communion (Synaxis)."<sup>1639</sup>

What exactly is this "Synaxis"? Rev. Dr. A. Cleveland Coxe here refers<sup>1640</sup> to "Leighton's Works.... Its Editor<sup>1641</sup> says: 'Leighton uses a word for the Holy Communion which is worth noting, because it is rarely used by Western theologians.' The word Synaxis is but a christianized form of the word Synagogue. But, like the word Koinoonia [alias 'Communion'], it points to Christ's mystical body - 'gathering together in one the children of God.' Synaxis - sunagei eis hen [alias 'A gathering together - it gathers together as one']. It sums up the idea: 'We, being many,

are one Bread and one Body; for we are all partakers of that one Bread.' Compare John 11:52 and First Corinthians 10:15f."

In our next section but one, we shall see how Chrysostom understands this word Synaxis antipaedocommunionistically. First, however, we need to take a brief look at the Church of Alexandria - half-way between Abulides's Ethiopia and Chrysostom's Constantinople.

#### **546. The Canons of the Church of Alexandria in Ancient Egypt**

The Canons of the Church of Alexandria are similar to those of Abulides above. Canon 19 concerns "Catechumens and the ordinance of Baptism and the Missa" - the latter word referring to the dismissing of all the Catechumens from the Eucharistic Service just before the elements are consecrated.<sup>1642</sup>

Canon 28 states: "None of the 'Believers' [alias the communicating 'Faithful'] should taste anything, except after he has taken the sacred Mysteries." Canon 29 apparently refers to communicating by Sacramental Assistants "when they take Communion."<sup>1643</sup> Canon 30, however, concerns not the Communicants but rather "Catechumens and the like."

#### **547. John Chrysostom of Constantinople: only the catechized are to commune**

Rev. Dr. Coxe explains<sup>1644</sup> that Constantinople's great theologian John Chrysostom describes "the Synaxis" as "phrikoodestatee." That means awesome or shudder-inspiring. That, Coxe elucidates, "is a very different thing from maxime tremenda [alias 'most shaking'], as applied to the modern 'Mass'.... For Chrysostom applies it to the participation of the 'Sunaxis' [alias to participating in the 'Getting Together'] - and not to the 'oblation' [alias the sacrificial 'lifting up' and subsequent manducating of the elements thus lifted up]....

"He [viz. Chrysostom] calls 'the Synaxis' shudderful (to borrow a word from the Germans) - because the unworthy recipient, in the Synaxis, eats and drinks his own condemnation. First Corinthians 11:29-34." Indeed, we shall soon see that Chrysostom accordingly excluded all uncatechized persons from manducating at and of the Lord's Supper.

Chrysostom, the Metropolitan Overseer of Constantinople, in his Instruction to Catechumens, states that only "the initiated know the virtue of this Supper." He explains: "You yourselves all know it a little while hence"<sup>1644</sup> - namely, after those Catechumens there being addressed would themselves have become Communicants.

For elsewhere, the disciplinarianistic Chrysostom writes that he would "inflict punishment" upon the disobedient - "by ordering them to be excluded from the Holy Mysteries" of the Sacrament of Communion. Indeed, even a Christian should only "with a pure conscience enjoy the Holy Table" - and "be a partaker of the Communion."<sup>1645</sup>

In his Homily on Matthew 26:26-28 concerning the Eucharist, Chrysostom declares:<sup>1646</sup> "Let

no 'Judas' receive [the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper] - lest he suffer the fate of Judas!... Though it be from ignorance that he come to communicate - forbid him! Be not afraid" to do so!

In a Homily on the Acts of the Apostles, Chrysostom thinks it better to leave the Catechumenate - than hypocritically to bear a meaningless title. He challenges such Catechumens: "Do you still doubt the divinity of Jesus Christ? Then leave! Listen no more to the Holy Word, and remove your name from the list of the Catechumens! But if you believe in Christ, God and man - and if you are clear about religion - then why these delays, these postponements, and this negligence?"<sup>1647</sup>

In one of Chrysostom's Homilies on First Corinthians, he describes the customs where covenant parents presented to the Presbyter, their children - so that the latter could become enrolled as Catechumens. This was done by signing up<sup>1648</sup> those children into the Catechism Class. In Africa, that same procedure was accompanied by also tasting salt.<sup>1649</sup>

In John Chrysostom's Homilies on First Corinthians 11:17, he quotes<sup>1650</sup> Paul's words: "When you assemble yourselves together..., it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper" as a blessing - without adequate and careful preparation! Unworthy participation would occur, whenever the Communicant was guilty of "drunkenness" or "unseasonable laughter" or "buffoonery" or of "not discerning the Lord's body" etc.

This would also occur by "not searching - not bearing in mind...the greatness of the things set before him; not estimating the weight of the gift" upon the Lord's Table. "This is enough for you to use all vigilance - unless you should be altogether fallen!"

This obviously excludes Paedocommunion. Indeed, "the uninitiated does not know these things."<sup>1651</sup> For, as Bingham the Church Historian points out,<sup>1652</sup> "the Catechumens and others...were allowed to hear the Lessons read - though not to be present [thereafter,] at what was strictly called the 'Communion Service.'"<sup>1653</sup>

Again, in his Homily on Second Corinthians 1:6-7, Chrysostom presented the 'Communion Prayer' of the liturgical Deacon. The latter would say:<sup>1654</sup> "Let us pray earnestly for the Catechumens!" That was done, explained Chrysostom, "although the Catechumens are as yet aliens.... They do not have con-fid-ence [alias "co-fid-eles"-ness, or the right to co-manducate together with the "Fid-eles" alias the Communicants], but have need of others who have been initiated....

"The Catechumens' prayers...[are] that they [the Catechumens] may not remain Catechumens" - but that God "would open the ears of their hearts.... 'You must pray, O Catechumens, for the angel of peace!' ...

"But some are without understanding - so stupid, so depraved, as to stand and talk not only during 'the Time of the Catechumens' but also during 'the Time of the Faithful.'" By the former established expression - 'the Time of the Catechumens' - is meant the first part of the Worship Service before the Catechumens were sent out ('missa est') prior to the commencement of the second part of the Worship Service when the Eucharist was celebrated. By the latter established

expression - 'the Time of the Faithful' - Chrysostom and his contemporaries mean the Communion Service of the Fideles alias the Communicants alone.

In his Homily on First Timothy 1:18-19, Chrysostom says "it is presumptuous...to receive unworthily (First Corinthians 11:27-30)." He adds: "You who are initiated, know this!"<sup>1655</sup>

Finally, in his Homilies on Hebrews (5:1-3 & 5:12f & 6:1-3f), he discusses<sup>1656</sup> the need to progress from "milk" to "strong meat." He said: "It is in the power even of those who are children, and the young, to come to that 'full age'" - without 'laying again a foundation of repentance.' For if he [the Apostle] again baptized them and [then] catechized them afresh..., they would remain perpetually incorrigible." Hebrews 6:4-6.

Infant Baptism and subsequent Catechism both seem to be presupposed here - before Communion. The Apostle, said Chrysostom, had [first!] "baptized them - and [had on another occasion] catechized them" later. For they had "been baptized at the beginning." Thereafter, "they were...taught what things ought to be done - and what ought not."

#### **548. Augustine himself was first catechized before he was first eucharized**

We now come to the greatest theologian since the Apostle Paul and before the Protestant Reformation - Augustine of Hippo-Regius, the later brilliant pupil of the antipaedocommunionistic Ambrose of Milan. Remarkably, Augustine himself was the product of a 'mixed marriage.'

In many American 'mixed marriages' - Baptist fathers neglect to get their babies baptized, against the wishes of their better-informed but overly-submissive Presbyterian mothers. Similarly, Augustine too was left unbaptized in infancy.

For he was the son of a then-unbelieving father. Yet Augustine's mother was a godly and covenant-believing woman (cf. First Corinthians 7:13-14).

Quite apart from the fact that such was a mixed marriage, especially for reasons of sacramentalistic superstition engendered by neo-paganistic infiltration into the fourth-century Church - Infant-Baptism was then often postponed to adulthood or even till one's deathbed. Why? Under the erroneous impression that more sins would thus be washed away than what was then deemed to be the case with Infant' Baptism!

Beginning but not completing his catechization, yet coming to a simple faith in the Lord during his childhood, Augustine then backslid several times. Only later did he make his first public profession of faith in Christ - after completing his interrupted catechization, at his Baptism when more than thirty years old - and before he ever eucharized. His Confessions (to God) tell the story.

There, Augustine wrote seriatim (to God):<sup>1657</sup> "As a [post-toddler] boy, I had heard about eternal life promised to us through the humility of the Lord.... I was signed with the sign of the cross, and was seasoned with His salt [a rite in the Western Church at enrolment as a Catechumen, with the expectation after much instruction of being approved for admission to the Eucharist]....

My mother...greatly trusted in You....

"One time, while yet a boy, being suddenly seized with pains in the stomach and being at the point of death, You saw, O my God - for even then You were my Keeper - with what emotion of mind and with what faith I solicited ...the Baptism of Your Christ.... I at that time believed, with my mother and the whole house except my father.... My God, I would gladly know, if it be Your will - to what end my Baptism was then deferred!"

After backsliding into a life of sin, Augustine later recalled how, just before he was thirty: "To Milan I came, to Ambrose the Bishop...whose eloquent discourse did at that time strenuously dispense to Your people the flour of Your wheat, the gladness of Your oil, and the sober intoxication of Your wine [Psalms 4:7 & 104:15]. Unknowingly, I was led to him...as a [catechetical] Teacher of the truth.... I resolved, therefore, [again] to be a Catechumen....

"By this time my mother, made strong by her piety, had come to me.... I had disclosed to her that I was now no longer a Manichaeian - though not yet a catholic Christian.... She believed...that before she departed this life, she would see me a catholic 'Believer.'"

By 'Believer' - Augustine here means a faithful 'Communicant.' Viz. after 'the Catechumens had given full proof of the ripeness of their knowledge and the steadfastness of their faith' - 'they were...admitted to the Table of the Lord and styled Fideles' alias Faithful (meaning Communicants).1658

"I was confounded and converted," continues Augustine. "I rejoiced that also the old Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets were laid before me, to be perused....

"I heard Ambrose.... I then went to Simplicianus - the father of Ambrose (at that time a Bishop).... I mentioned to him [Simplicianus] that I had read certain books of the Platonists - which Victorinus, sometime Professor of Rhetoric at Rome (who died a Christian)...had translated.... He congratulated me....

"He spoke of Victorinus himself..., whom he had known very intimately.... He [Victorinus] used to read, as Simplicianus said, the Holy Scripture most studiously.... Suddenly and unexpectedly, [Victorinus] said to Simplicianus, as he himself informed me: 'Let us go to the church; I wish to be made a Christian!' And he [Simplicianus], not containing himself for joy, accompanied him.... Having been admitted to...instruction [when he again 'became a Catechumen'] - he not long after gave in his name...by Baptism....

"By letters," Augustine yet later recalled while still making his Confessions to God, "I notified Your Bishop, the holy man Ambrose, about my former errors and present resolutions - with a view to his advising me which of Your books it was best for me to read so that I might be readier and fitter for the reception of such great grace. He recommended Isaiah the Prophet....

"The time had arrived at which I was to give in my name [for Baptism]..., being now clothed with the humility appropriate to Your Sacraments.... We were baptized" - and, of course, only thereafter first admitted to the Eucharist for the very first time.

So much for Augustine's family background, his catechization, his Baptism, and his later admission to the Eucharist. Now we shall proceed to look at some of his works which he wrote only after becoming a Communicant Member of the Christian Church.

#### 549. **Augustine even in 417 A.D. catechized all would-be Communicants**

One needs to recall the earlier cases of backslidden church members manducating from the "deadly cup" dedicated to idols - and also the case of 'exorcism' where the sacramental wine was force-fed by a Deacon into a post-infantile non-catechized little girl (or puella). Those cases occurred in the A.D. 251 time of Cyprian.1659

Augustine - even a century and a half after Cyprian - clearly disapproved of all of the above procedures recorded by Cyprian. Indeed, Augustine's own personal views about those famous cases, have already been discussed by us above.1660

Elsewhere, Augustine often used the word catechizare in the established and technical sense of the word.1661 Thus, he described how he himself had "been admitted to...instruction" and interrogated - prior to his own becoming a Communicant Member of the Church.1662

In 393 A.D., Augustine wrote his work On the Creed - being A Sermon to the Catechumens (on the Apostle's Creed).1663 Indeed, in 400 A.D., Augustine wrote to Januarius that "'whosoever eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself' (First Corinthians 11:29)" - because the Eucharist's "sacred food will not submit to be despised!"1664

Perhaps the same year, and probably no later than 406 A.D., Augustine wrote also his seminal work On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed - "so that each may catechize rejoicingly!"1665 This contained material for teaching uncatechized would-be Eucharizers the contents of both the Bible and Church History. The Biblical material included: the History of the World and its Six Ages from creation to the present times; the Resurrection, Judgment and Theodicy; the Mission of the Holy Spirit; the Church; and Faith.1666

Catechizing is needed, says Augustine, because if "a man wishes to become a Christian - then his wish to become one, is not so 'earnest' as his desire to feign one.... So soon as he begins to have this manner of desire - we may judge him then to have made a genuine approach to us."

Anent all of the catechetical instruction given to the Catechumen and would-be Eucharizer, Augustine wrote: "After the instruction, the person is to be asked whether he believes these things, and earnestly desires to observe them. And on his replying to that effect - then certainly he is to be solemnly signed and dealt with according to the custom of the Church." Luke 2:42-47 cf. Hebrews 5:12 to 6:9 (q.v.!).

Indeed, "on the subject of the Sacrament which he receives - it is first to be well impressed upon his notice that the signs of divine things are...things visible, but that invisible things themselves are also honoured in them." As Augustine also elsewhere remarked, the Candidate had

to signify his adherence to the presentation of the whole of the Christian Message which he had just heard, and to renounce the service of idols.1667

Like Cyprian, Augustine was influenced by African magic, believing sacramentalistically that Baptism cancelled Adam's transmitted original sin, and the Eucharist also our own progressive sins. This was a result also of his exaggerated degree of over-reaction to Pelagianism, which denied such transmissibility. So, even the sacramentology of Pelagians such as Julian was viewed as being suspect. While themselves paedobaptistic, the Pelagians rightly argued against the indispensability of paedobaptism - and also against the very practice of paedocommunion.

So Augustine here over-reacted. Yet it is clear that he, though certainly no Zwinglian, was also no Transubstantiationist. For he then stated, anent catechized would-be Eucharizers: "On the subject of the Sacrament indeed which he receives, it is first to be well impressed upon his notice that the signs of divine things are (it is true) things visible, but that the invisible things themselves are also honoured in them, and that that species which is then sanctified by the blessing, is therefore not to be regarded merely in the way in which it is regarded in any common use."

Augustine told Catechumens about to be admitted to the Eucharist: "Follow the example of good men!.... Not only is the love of God enjoined upon us, but also the love of our neighbour - on which two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. And this is fulfilled by no one save the man who has received the gift, the Holy Spirit, Who is indeed equal with the Father and with the Son. For this same Trinity is God, on Whom every hope ought to be placed."1668

Question: How many, if any, modern Paedocommunionists - first pre-catechize those whom they would eucharize as thoroughly as did Augustine? Answer: Not one!

In his 417 A.D. work *On the Forgiveness of Sins and Baptism*, Augustine wrote:1669 that "infants ought to be baptized.... They are rightly called 'believers'....

"But yet, who knows not that the baptized infant fails to be benefitted from what he received as a little child - if, on coming to years of reason, he fails to believe and to abstain from unlawful desires? If, however, the infant departs from the present life after he has received Baptism..., he shall be made perfect in that light of truth which, remaining unchangeable for evermore, illumines the justified in the presence of their Creator."

#### **550. Augustine on the eucharization of the baptized as regards John 6:53**

So much concerning Baptism. But then Augustine goes on to add about the Lord Jesus: "Concerning the Sacrament of His Own Holy Table..., none but a baptized person has a right to approach."

Here, Augustine is quite right - only "a baptized person has a right to approach"; viz., to approach "the Sacrament of His Own Holy Table" in order to mandicate thereof. So unbaptized persons, including also unbaptized covenant children, may not under any circumstances eucharize - and may not and do not even thus "approach" the Holy Table. Cf. "come near and keep it" in

Exodus 12:48f.

But Augustine does not here say that all baptized persons have the right to manducate there! Still less does he say that all baptized persons have the duty to manducate there. And yet still less does he say that any or all baptized persons should manducate soon after their Baptisms.

Indeed, he had just said previously that "the baptized infant fails to be benefitted from what he received [in Baptism] as a little child - if, on coming to years of reason, he fails to believe." If anything, that might suggest the attainment of those "years of reason" and the successful completion of catechization as regards his reasonable religion - before that infantly-baptized person further be admitted to eucharize for the very first time.

Augustine then immediately goes on to say ("concerning the...Holy Table") - that "Except you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you shall have no life in you [John 6:53]!" That Bible text is true in itself. For all persons, regardless of age, are indeed spiritually lifeless - unless they eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood.

However, Jesus did not utter those words in respect of His Table! So the sacramentalizing Augustine here errs very greatly, in applying the text to the Lord's Table.

Augustine errs further too, in the very next chapter. There he states: 1670 "Will, however, any man be so bold as to say that this statement has no relation to infants, and that they can have life in them without partaking of His body and blood - on the ground that He does not say, 'Except one eat' but 'Except you eat' - as if He were addressing those who were able to hear and to understand, which of course infants cannot do? But he who says this, is inattentive; because unless all are embraced in the statement that without the body and the blood of the Son of man men cannot have life - it is to no purpose that even the elder age is solicitous of it.... From all this it follows that even for the life of infants was His flesh given, which He gave for the life of the World. And that even they will not have life if they eat not the flesh of the Son of man."

We think that Augustine here rightly stated regarding Christ that also infants need to be "partaking of His body and blood." We even agree with his subsequent statements "that even for the life of infants was His flesh given" and "that even they will not have life if they eat not the flesh of the Son of man."

Indeed, in Augustine's defence, he does not here say that infants must manducate at the Lord's Table while they are still infants. If that were to be what the sacramentalizing Augustine means, it would necessarily follow that all unbaptized and baptized but uneucharized infants even of believing parents would remain lost until those infants start eucharizing. And that would be a gross sacramentalistic error - an error into which neither the antipaedocommunionistic Pelagians nor even the Anti-Pelagian Sacramentalist Augustine could fall, without inviting severe criticism.

We believe John 6:53 means that all who do not eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood spiritually, are lost - whether or not they then or ever manducate at the Lord's Table. Yet the latter can hardly be prescribed to infants. And also Augustine does not here say so. Instead, he rightly goes on to say "that even for the life of infants was His flesh given, which He gave for the life of the



World. And that even they will not have life if they eat not the flesh of the Son of man."

In this particular work, Augustine rightly insists that all sin-stained descendants of the sinful Adam from their conception onward are everlastingly damned from their conception onward, unless they be regenerated and gifted with faith in Christ before they die. But then Augustine quite wrongly argues that this occurs at and because of Baptism.

Augustine is here dealing with Baptism (also of infants and toddlers) rather than with eucharizing persons (at whatever age). His sacramentalistic thrust that unbaptized infants (and adults) are ipso facto lost, needs to be rejected. Yet one should still appreciate his stress here on once-and-for-all Baptism, rather than on repeated eucharizing.

One should particularly reject the view that those who do not drink communion wine and bread have no life in them. This is here Augustine's own erroneous reading of John chapter six - which, however, is pre-eucharistic and thus has nothing whatsoever to do with the Eucharist.

Regenerated fetuses possessing a God-given faith in Christ even without being able to be baptized and a fortiori to get eucharized, are ipso facto already eating of Christ's flesh and drinking of His blood through the action of the Holy Spirit within them. Such believing fetuses and babies even before and therefore independently of Baptism, already have everlasting life in them - especially when they die before becoming able to get baptized. Indeed, even baptized babies which believe in Christ - have everlasting life within them long before they thereafter first eucharize.

Augustine was wrong if he here meant that non-eucharizing yet believing infants and toddlers have no everlasting life in them. And those who rightly or wrongly think Augustine so believed - and who themselves so believe - are clearly wrong and to that extent not Protestant.

Yet, in chapter 33 Augustine even says:1671 "What else do they say who call the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper life, than that which is written: 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven' and 'The bread that I shall give is My flesh for the life of the world' and 'Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood you shall have no life in you?' If, therefore, as so many and such divine witnesses agree, neither salvation nor eternal life can be hoped for by any man without Baptism and the Lord's body and blood - it is vain to promise these blessings to infants without them.

"Moreover, if it be only sins that separate man from salvation and eternal life, there is nothing else in infants which these sacraments can be the means of removing, but the guilt of sin.... We thus ought not to doubt that even for infants yet to be baptized, that precious blood was shed."

True, also infants and even fetuses must feed upon Christ - or else be damned. However, as chapter 33 demonstrates, the nature of that feeding is neither baptismal nor eucharistical. Indeed, even Paedocommunionists do not necessarily deny that adults and also fetuses and infants can by Spirit-given faith feed on Christ's body and blood without eucharizing.

Compare too Augustine's statement in Book II (chapter 42) of that same work, where Augustine says that "sanctification is not merely of one measure [viz. not necessarily only through

the Sacraments]. For even Catechumens, I take it, are sanctified in their own measure by the sign of Christ and the prayer of imposition of hands. And what they receive, is holy - although it is not the body of Christ [through the Lord's Supper]."1672 So it is clear Augustine is here not advocating the necessity of eucharizing just-baptized babies, as distinct from catechized older children.

Against all the above Augustinian quotations which he himself overlooks, the modern Paedocommunionist Tommy Lee musters only two citations. The one he culls (without disclosing its more remote Augustinian source) from The Catholic Encyclopedia. That simply reads:1673 "Why is the blood which in the likeness of sinful flesh was shed for the remission of sins, ministered [so] that the little one (parvulus) may drink [so] that he may have life?" etc.

Notice, however, that this parvulus is not said to be an uncatechized baby or toddler - nor said to drink communion wine; nor said to drink the latter when still a baby or a toddler. See, on this, regarding a similar citation, also our section 551 below.

Tommy Lee's second quotation1674 is from Augustine's Sermon 174:7 against the Pelagians, on First Timothy 1:15. That passage has nothing to do with either Baptism or the Supper! Indeed, against the Pelagians who denied that infants and toddlers were sinners - Augustine here simply says: "They're infants, but they receive His Sacraments. They are infants, but they share in His Table - in order to have life in themselves."

Observe, however, that Augustine does not here say that such (elect) infants did not partake of Christ already before they were baptized and before they yet later first eucharized. Nor does he say when they might first eucharize. Nor does he say they first eucharized right after being baptized. Nor does he say uncatechizable speechless infants have no life until they later first eucharize. He suggests nothing more than that partaking of Baptism and the Eucharist strengthen life already present.

### **551. Augustine sacramentalized; but did not de-catechize!**

In his very famous 417 A.D. treatise On the Proceedings of Pelagius, Augustine says that "Candidates...are catechetically instructed with a view to their knowing the Creed."1675 By this, he doubtless means catechumenal Candidates - with the goal of then being considered for admission to their first manducation at the Lord's Supper.

Again, in his 420 A.D. work Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Augustine declares:1676 "In the Church of the Saviour, infants believe by [other] means than other people - even as they have derived those sins which are remitted them in Baptism from other people. Nor do you think that they who have been without [the Sacrament of?] the body and blood of Christ cannot have life - although He Himself said, 'Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you shall have no life in you!' (John 6:34)."

What does this mean? It seems ambiguous1677 Yet, if anything, it seems to argue not for but rather against Paedocommunion.

In his Tract on the Gospel of John, 1678 Augustine says: "Bear in mind the meaning of the Scripture 'Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord'! First Corinthians 11:27.

"Now when the Apostle said this, he was dealing with those who were taking the body of the Lord, like any other food, in an undiscerning and careless spirit.... He is thus taken to task, who does not discern [First Corinthians 11:29b] - that is, does not distinguish the body of the Lord from the other kinds of food. What condemnation must be his who, [like Judas] in the guise of a friend, comes as an enemy to His Table! If negligence in the guest is thus visited with blame - what must be the punishment that will fall on the man that sells the very Person Who has invited him to His Table?"

And indeed - "what about all that has been written, since our Lord's ascension, with canonical truth and authority? Is it not read and heard with equanimity by every believer and Catechumen, also before...he receive the Holy Spirit [at his later 'Confirmation'] - even although it is not yet understood as it ought to be?... The sacramental privileges of Believers [alias Fideles or Communicants who have professed their faith in Christ in public] are not exhibited to them [the Catechumens]. But, in order that they [those privileges] may be all the more ardently desired by them - they [those privileges] are honourably concealed from their view." 1679

That is to say, the "sacramental privileges" of the Eucharist are "concealed" from the view of those who are still merely unconfirmed Catechumens. For even Catechumens were not permitted to manducate at the Lord's Table until getting confirmed and thereby admitted to that Supper only after the successful completion of their catechumenal catechization.

In an important sermon, Augustine asked rhetorically (while expecting a denial): 1680 "Those among you who are yet called Catechumens or...Hearers, when it [the Holy Communion Formula] was being read - could they be Understanders [alias examined and confirmed Communicants] too?" No! Accordingly, our discourse is directed to both [namely to Confirmed Communicants as well as to Non-Communicant Catechumens].

"Let them who already eat the 'flesh' of the Lord and drink His 'blood' - think what it is they eat and drink: lest, as the Apostle says, they eat and drink judgment to themselves' (First Corinthians 11:29)! But they who do not yet eat and drink...: what great care ought we to have, in building up the faithful, so that their 'approaching' [alias to catechize so as later to be able to manducate at the Eucharist] may profit them!" Cf. too also Exodus 12:43-49, especially the words "come near" alias "approach" in verse 48.

Sadly, even the great Augustine himself - under pressure from the increasing scourge of paganizing sacramentalism - sometimes advocated 'Child Communion' (though only after the catechization of the child concerned). Whenever he then welcomed pre-pubescent children to the Lord's Table, 1681 Augustine betrayed a misapprehension of Exodus 12:3f, 26f, 37 and Luke 2:40-47 and First Corinthians 11:23f cf. Luke 22:1-20 - and also a misunderstanding of John 6:51f.

Indeed, it should be pointed out that Augustine's On the Forgiveness of Sins, 1682 anent John

6:51f, in relation to infants - to which the Pro-Paedocommunist Bingham had appealed 1863 - does not really teach either the necessity or the permittedness or even the then-occurrence of eucharistic manducation by infants. Augustine's statements there may be either spiritually or sacramentally construed - inasmuch as he expounds John 6:56 as meaning "to dwell in Christ and to have Christ dwelling in us."

Note too that in Sermon 82 (1-2), Augustine says that only Post-Catechumens took the Lord's Supper. And in Sermon 112 (5), Augustine declares that "it is not that which is seen which feeds, but that which is believed." Indeed, in his On John (25:12), Augustine actually declares: "Believe; and thou hast eaten!"

On the one hand, Augustine drew sharp distinction between the sign and the thing signified. Yet on the other, he was to some extent clearly infected with the virus of sacramentalism.

Strange are Augustine's statements in *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*. 1684 There, he observes that unless "infants shall eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood - they shall not have life in themselves." There, he further states that "Innocent, of blessed memory, says that infants (parvulos) have not life without Christ's Baptism [and] partaking (manducaverunt...et biberint) of Christ's body and blood." And there, he also claims that "reconciliation is in the laver of regeneration and in the flesh and blood of Christ without which not even infants can have life in themselves." 1685

We ourselves could only agree with such statements if they were to mean that believing infants already have everlasting life directly through the Spirit prior to as well as after their Infant-Baptism and long prior to their later First Communion. However - on parvulos and infantes - see further in our sections 553f below (in connection with the ongoing Post-Augustinian corruption of the Eucharist toward increasing Paedocommunionism).

Yet Augustine did not consider Christian children's manducation at the Eucharist while children, as a sine qua non of their everlasting life. At a time of increasing superstition, Baptisms were then often postponed till one's deathbed in adulthood.

Augustine and his colleagues insisted on not just Baptism (even on one's adult deathbed!) but also subsequent Catechization toward admission to manducation at the Eucharist and also the attainment of some degree of intellectual understanding of Christian Truth as a sine qua non for anyone's admission to the Lord's Table. So even in his own day, the admission of catechized children rather than only of adolescents or adults to the Supper - could not yet have been very widespread.

As Augustine himself wrote: "What, moreover, is all that time for - during which they hold the name and place of Catechumens - except to hear what the faith and pattern of Christian life should be, so that first they may prove themselves and then eat of the bread of the Lord and drink of the chalice?.... This training actually goes on during all that time which the Church has beneficially appointed for the Candidates for admission to the Catechumenate.

"Their study too becomes far more earnest and intensive during the period in which they are

called Competentes.”<sup>1686</sup> Clearly, then, Augustine cannot properly be enlisted in support of any kind of Paedocommunion which abandons the necessity of catechizing before first eucharizing!

Moreover, Augustine must be commended for warmly upholding the necessity of - ‘Catechism Before Communion.’ Luke 2:40-47. In that regard - following the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Early Patristic Church and even the Talmud - also Augustine quite long withstood the ever-increasing pernicious pressures to syncretize antipaedocommunionistic Christianity with paedocommunionistic Paganism.

Indeed, according to the Jesuit Maldonatus, it was not Augustine but the wayward Bishop of Rome - Innocent I (A.D. 402-417) - who first ordained that the Eucharist be given to infants. See Samuel Rutherford’s 1644 *Due Right of Presbyteries*.<sup>1687</sup>

### **552. Summary: the Late-Patristic development toward Paedocommunion**

We have here in this present chapter dealt with the Late-Patristic developments toward Paedocommunion. More appropriately, we have titled this chapter Pagan Paedocommunionism invades the Late-Patristic Church.

Here and previously, we saw that the notion anent infants and small children being permitted to manducate at religious sacrifices, though ancient, is essentially pagan in origin. It was totally unknown to the true religion of Old Testament Israel. Much of Post-Christian Judaism - but to this very day never the Judaistic Karaites and other such ‘orthodox’ groups - extended the Passover to women only after 180 A.D., and to small children (but never to sucklings) only after 230 A.D.

Paedocommunion was unknown also in the Early Church before at least 251 A.D. (when Cyprian seemed to disapprove of that innovation). More demonstrably, it was not really found without disapproval - until 350 to 400f. For till then, by and large, the Biblical doctrine of catechizing before initial admission to communion not prior to puberty was maintained in the Patristic Church.

Indeed, even long after the A.D. 248-251 Decian persecution of Christians by pagan Paedocommunionists, the Patristic Christian Church yet stuck to Scripture’s custom of ‘Catechism Before Communion.’ Thus: Dionysius of Alexandria; Victorinus; the Councils of Eliberis, Ancyra, Neocaesarea, Nicea and Laodicea; the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles; Cyril; Athanasius; Early Liturgies; Gregory of Nyssa; Ambrose; Chrysostom; and Augustine. Athanasius, Ambrose and Chrysostom rigidly barred even Catechumens from the Eucharist. Indeed - we think unwisely (cf. Exodus 12:26) - they barred such Catechumens from even viewing the Supper.

Throughout, the previously- mentioned catechetical decisions of the Councils of Eliberis (A.D. 305) and Ancyra (A.D. 314) and Neocaesarea (315) and Laodicea (343f) and Constantinople (381) - were all accepted and received by the Ecumenical Synods of Chalcedon (451) and the subsequent Ecumenical Synods.<sup>1688</sup> They and indeed also the Constitutions of the Holy Apostles still seem to have required the long-traditional three-years-long ‘Catechism Before Communion.’

Yet by the beginning of the fifth century, the Church did more and more permit catechized 'confirmed' children of an unspecified age (but never sucklings or other uncatechized persons) to manducate at the Supper. Sadly, when this was further downgraded even to uncatechized toddlers and thereafter even to babies, it created a bad precedent which subsequently led to rapid degeneration - especially in the so-called Eastern-'Orthodox' Churches which then started eucharizing all Baptizees even in their tenderest infancy. However, more about that in our next chapter.