Benjamin Keach and Baptist Confessional Identity in Post-Restoration London, 1664-1704

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Abstract

Although Baptists were a significant group among the Protestant nonconformists of the English Restoration, they have received little direct attention in recent scholarship. Much of the scholarship that does deal with them does so only as part of a broader study of nonconformity, which does not adequately illuminate the specific confessional identity of the Baptists as a group. This dissertation – which is based on printed works, church records from London-area Baptist congregations, and other firsthand sources – examines Baptist identity as expressed in the life and writings of Benjamin Keach from 1664 to 1704. A leading figure among the London Particular Baptists, Keach was pastor of the Horselydown church in Southwark and his dozens of published works dealt with a variety of religious debates. These writings, and those of his co-religionists, illustrated three basic themes of Baptist identity as Keach understood it. These three components were (1) an appeal to Protestant orthodoxy, (2) the experience of persecution, and (3) an eschatological worldview. Flexible, but fundamentally consistent, this Baptist identity was particularly suited to the religious and political context of the late seventeenth century

Précis

Bien que les baptistes aient été un groupe important parmi les dissidents protestants de la restauration anglaise, ils n'apparaîssent généralement que dans des travaux sur la dissidence religieuse au sens large: ces recherchent survolent ou gomment carrément l'identité confessionnelle spécifique des baptistes. Cette thèse – basée sur une littérature imprimée ainsi que sur les registres des églises baptistes de la région de Londres – examine la vie et les écrits de Benjamin Keach, entre 1664 et 1704. Figure importante parmi les baptistes calvinistes de Londres, Keach a été le pasteur de l'église de Horselydown dans Southwark et ses dizaines d'œuvres publiées ont ouvert de multiples débats religieux. Ses écrits, tout comme ceux de ses coreligionnaires, abordent et illustrent trois thèmes fondamentaux de l'identité baptiste telle que Keach l'avait comprise. Les trois composants étaient (1) un appel à l'orthodoxie protestante, (2) l'expérience de la persécution, et (3) une vision du monde eschatologique. Souple mais fondamentalement cohérente, cette identité baptiste était particulièrement bien adaptée au contexte religieux et politique de la fin du XVIIe siècle.

Acknowledgements

I would like to give my thanks and acknowledge the contributions of several people who provided me with assistance and valuable feedback in the writing of this dissertation. Firstly, my thanks to my supervisor Professor Brian Cowan, who guided me throughout this process with suggestions as to the scope of my research and the overall layout of the work in terms of the focus of different chapters. I would also like to acknowledge the helpful editorial feedback and substantive suggestions I received from Professor Torrance Kirby. Professor Kirby was also one of the editors, along with Dr. Matthew Milner, of my previously published book chapter "'Sweet mirth and Musick rare': Sensual spirituality in the work of Benjamin Keach," which I drew upon for sections of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Some of my most helpful feedback over the last five years has been from my fellow students at McGill. While it would be impossible to give a record of all the various suggestions and questions I have received in conversation and at academic conferences and talks, each of which had their impact, I must acknowledge the contributions of a handful of my contemporaries in particular. I received a number of corrections and editorial suggestions from Dr. Matthew Wyman-McCarthy, Raminder Saini, and Alexandra Ketchum, and I would especially like to single out the invaluable editorial feedback provided by Emily Paskevics. In a less formal capacity, friends and colleagues who may not have read a full chapter of this dissertation, but whose questions and collegial conversation were beneficial throughout this process include Carleigh Nicholls, Peter Hynd, and Stephan Pigeon, among others.

Historical research such as this would be next to impossible without the many people who do the work of preserving and cataloguing print and manuscript sources in libraries and archives. To that end I acknowledge the professional and efficient work done by the archivists and librarians at McGill's McLennan Library, the London Metropolitan Archives, the National Archives at Kew, and the British Library. Emily Burgoyne and Emma Walsh, librarians at Angus Library at Regents Park College, Oxford, were of particular assistance in locating additional manuscript sources for my research.

In closing, I must give a final word of thanks to my mother, Pauline Halligan. Although she frankly admitted to me some months ago that she does not know what this dissertation is about, she has been unfailing in her support for the past six years (and, for that matter, for the past thirty years). Needless to say, I would not be here if not for her.

Preface

I am the sole author of the entire contents of this dissertation. The large majority of what is written in the following pages has not appeared in print before, although sections of Chapter 3 (concerning Benjamin Keach's poetry and its use of "sensual spirituality") and Chapter 4 (concerning the printed debate over hymn-singing between Keach and Isaac Marlow) replicate the contents a book chapter I wrote that was published as "'Sweet mirth and Musick rare': Sensual spirituality in the work of Benjamin Keach," in *Mediating Religious Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Torrance Kirby and Matthew Milner (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 191-219. I have made changes and additions to this previous work, but the contents remain very similar.

My work here is novel in that it combines the extensive printed works of Benjamin Keach (which have been discussed in other works) with research on contemporary religious and political debates, and the historical context of post-Restoration England, from 1660 to 1704. This work includes a fuller examination of Keach's 1664 trial for seditious libel, and the subsequent publication of that trial in various forms, than has hitherto been done. My work on the "Repository" of Benjamin Stinton and Thomas Crosby's *History of the English Baptists* provides a context for these works and the intentions of their authors, which no other scholarship has yet provided. While my research includes a variety of materials that other historians have previously utilized, my about the relationship between the post-Restoration political context and the shaping of three basic themes in Baptist identity is original, and contributes something new to the understanding of English religious history.

Introduction: Benjamin Keach and Baptist Identity

Benjamin Keach was born in Buckinghamshire in 1640, and died in Southwark in 1704. A Particular Baptist, Keach was a prolific writer of poetry and prose, sermons and hymns, who produced no less than forty-six original works. Keach's public career began in 1664, when he was tried at the assizes in Aylesbury for having written a children's primer that was inconsistent with the Act of Uniformity, and moved with his family to London in the early 1670s, where he became the minister of the Horselydown congregation in Southwark.[1] His subsequent writings and sermons would often cover topics of religious doctrine and ordinances, such as believer's baptism, Calvinist soteriology, and a spirited defence of singing hymns in worship. Other works were allegories and poems that made polemical attacks against Quakers, provided moral guidance about the temptations of sin, and, in a more political vein, warned of the threat of Roman Catholicism, or "popery," in England and advocated for the cause of greater religious toleration for nonconformists.[2] His writings were extensive and hit upon a variety of topics important to him as a Baptist at the time of the Restoration. Furthermore, Keach's writings were widely read and, amongst Baptists, they were influential. C.E. Whiting has called him the "most popular of the Nonconformist verse writers," and indeed some of his books were published into the late eighteenth century, while recent works on Baptist theology cite his influence on subsequent generations of Baptist confessions of faith and hymn singing, and call him "the most important theologian of the

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[1] The name was originally "Horse-lie-down," and sources contain a variety of spellings. This dissertation will use the spelling "Horselydown" throughout, save for direct quotations.

[2] The term "popery" is used throughout this dissertation. It is not used as a pejorative, but in order to reflect the prevailing image that English Protestants, and Baptists like Keach, had of the Roman Catholic Church. "Popery," with all the connotations that word brought with it, is the subject of their anxieties, and so I regard it as the most appropriate term to use in discussing the topic at hand. I must also note that "nonconformity," "dissent," and their many variations are not capitalized. There is no particular academic point to be made in this decision: it is merely a stylistic choice.

Restoration era among the Calvinistic Baptists." In short, then, Keach was a prolific and influential member of the Baptist community in London, and it is from this perspective that he is of interest.[3]

The current work is neither a biography of Benjamin Keach, nor an attempt at a general history of English Baptists at the time of the Restoration. Instead, the topic at hand is Baptist identity, and more specifically, what Keach and those around him perceived being a Baptist to mean. To that end, Keach's life and writings provide a case through which to explore Baptists' experiences between 1664 and 1704. An important part of this confessional identity is, of course, specific religious beliefs, what those consist of, and how they are expressed. But for Keach and other Baptists, religious life and worship were not the whole of what being a Baptist meant. As a nonconformist after the Restoration, being a Baptist also meant being subject to persecution and facing the perception that they were radical, rebellious, or seditious. Thus, the following chapters will not deal only with theology, sermons, and confessions of faith (though these topics will certainly feature prominently), but also with the immediate historical and political context in which the various players were acting.

Rather than being a social history of Baptists, this dissertation is primarily a study of Baptist religion, which also seeks to address its intersection with the contemporary political situation. In this sense the reader may find some common ground between this work and some of the scholarship on confessionalization, which sees the "confessional

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[3] C.E. Whiting, *Studies in English Puritanism from the Restoration to the Revolution, 1660-1688* (New York and Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1931), 562; William H. Brackney, *A Genetic History of Baptist Thought* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2004), 116; The basic biographical information given here is covered by the ODNB entry for Keach, and more substantial biographical work: Austin Walker, *The Excellent Benjamin Keach* (Dundas ON: Joshua Press, 2004); Beth Lynch, "Keach, Benjamin (1640–1704)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15202, (Accessed 12 May 2016).

element" of Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism as "the leading category of society," and describes these confessions' development through "mutual rivalry and emulation."[4] Much of that scholarship deals with the *longue durée* issues of secularization and the shape of European society, with which this dissertation does not engage, but certain elements of the Calvinist or Reformed confessional identity as described by other historians may be readily recognizable in Keach's Baptist identity. Like the Huguenots of the sixteenth century, Keach emphasized "self-abnegation" and a "sense of being distinct from, albeit living alongside, the rest of the world."[5] The Calvinist confessional emphasis on political and military conflict as "eschatological struggle between Christ and Antichrist" is similarly familiar.[6] Given Keach's occasional citing of French divine Pierre Jurieu, and his references to popish persecution in France and elsewhere on the continent, these similarities may be no accident.

The scholarship on confessionalization remains largely focused on the German and continental context, but Heinz Schilling proposes that Anglicans may be counted as a fourth confessional church, and suggests that dissent in England played a role in the move towards secularism that characterizes the "Dynamism" of European civilization.[7] If Schiller is correct in this assessment, then Baptist history is one piece in the puzzle of what may be a broader history of how confessionalization and secularization played out in the English context. Certainly, in trying to better define and situate a Baptist identity,

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[4] Heinz Schilling, "Confessionalization: Historical and Scholarly Perspectives of a Comparative and Interdisciplinary Paradigm," in *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700:Essays in Honor and Memory of Bodo Nischan*, ed. John M. Headley, Hans J. Hillerbrand, and Anthony J. Papalas (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 24; Mark Greengrass, "The French Pastorate: Confessional Identity and Confessionalization in the Huguenot Minority, 1559-1685," in *The Protestant Clergy of Early Modern Europe*, ed. Scott Dixon and Luise Schorn-Schütte, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 176.
[5] Greengrass, "The French Pastorate," 192.
[6] Heinz Schilling, *Early Modern European Civilization and its Political and Cultural Dynamism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2008), 76-77.
[7] Heinz Schilling, *Early Modern European Civilization*, 19, 29.

Keach and his coreligionists were influenced by both the Calvinist churches and the Church of England in their understanding of persecution and of eschatology, borrowing from these pre-existing confessional frameworks. And, if other scholars wish to give a fuller account of confessionalization in England, and the role of dissenters in it, then one only hopes that this research may be of use to them.

As a partial history of English Baptists, this dissertation is not the first such work to deal with Benjamin Keach. Keach himself has been the focus of three dissertations: W.E. Spears' "The Baptist Movement in England in the Late Seventeenth Century as Reflected in the Work and Thought of Benjamin Keach, 1640-1704" in 1953, James Barry Vaughn's "Public Worship and Practical Theology in the Work of Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)" in 1989 and Jonathan W. Arnold's "The Reformed Theology of Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)" in 2009.[8] Each of these projects deals at some length with Keach's theology and religious writings, more so than the historical and political context in which he was acting. As such, there is bound to be some overlap between them and this dissertation, but the particular focus on contextualizing Keach and describing Baptists' identity renders this work sufficiently distinct. Another work that deals with Keach in particular is Austin Walker's, *The Excellent Benjamin Keach*. While it is a well written biography, it would be fair to characterize this book as being a confessional history, inasmuch as it is written from a Baptist perspective and aims to exhibit that

[8] W.E. Spears, "The Baptist Movement in England in the Late Seventeenth Century as Reflected in the Work and Thought of Benjamin Keach, 1640-1704" (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 1953); James Barry Vaughn, "Public Worship and Practical Theology in the Work of Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)" (PhD diss., St. Andrews University, 1989); Jonathan W. Arnold, "The Reformed Theology of Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)" (PhD diss., Regents Park College, University of Oxford, 2009).

terming Keach "excellent" is altogether appropriate.[9] As such, there is a good deal of analysis left to be done on Keach's writings and activities.

As for Baptists as a group, there have been a number of histories of British Baptists, from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first. Many of these have the character of a straightforward narrative, apparently written by Baptists and for Baptists. A list of such confessional histories, published by writers and publishers who were usually Baptists themselves, would range from Joseph Ivimey's 1811-1830 *A History of the English Baptists*, to W.T. Whitley's *A History of British Baptists* in 1923, and A.C. Underwood's *History of the English Baptists* in 1947.[10] More recent works include Michael Haykin's *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach: Rediscovering Our English Baptist Heritage*.[11] Keach features in most of these works, at least in passing. He also appears in more recent works including James Leo Garrett's *Baptist Theology, a Four Century Study*, and William H. Brackney's *A Genetic History of Baptist Thought*, which seek to provide an account of the origins of various Baptist religious beliefs and aspects of Baptist theology that are still held today.[12] Both of these works provide valuable information about Baptists in the seventeenth century, but the sheer scale of their chronology, and their goal of tracing Baptist theology into the present day, means that the particularities of the seventeenth century context are of secondary importance to them.

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[9] Walker, *Benjamin Keach*, 18.
[10] Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, 4 vols (London: Burditt, Button, Hamilton, Baynes, 1811-30); W.T. Whitley, *A History of British Baptists* (London: Charles Griffin and Co., 1923); A.C. Underwood, *A History of the English Baptists* (London: Baptist Union Publication Dept., 1947).
[11] Michael Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach: Rediscovering Our English Baptist Heritage* (Reformation Today Trust, 1996).
[12] James Leo Garrett, *Baptist Theology, a Four Century Study* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2009); William H. Brackney, *A Genetic History of Baptist Thought* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2004).

While Stephen Wright's *The Early English Baptists, 1603-1649* in 2006 provides an excellent general history of the Baptists in the first half of the century, as of this writing there is no recent work focusing on the Baptists in the later seventeenth century.[13] B.R. White's 1983 *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century* provides an overview of the century in compact volume. White covers the events of the Restoration in a chapter on the "End of the Great Persecution," but this single chapter can only provide a basic, if ably done, introduction to the topic.[14] The best available PhD thesis on Baptists in London during the late seventeenth century is Murdina MacDonald's "London Calvinistic Baptists 1689-1727: Tensions Within a Dissenting Community under Toleration," which characterizes the 1680s and 1690s as featuring internal debates among Baptists that were "primarily on ecclesiological issues such as congregational hymn-singing and laying on of hands."[15] There is naturally some overlap between MacDonald's thesis and this dissertation on account of the subject of hymn-singing having been important to Keach, and her work was of use in contextualizing my research for Chapter 4. Beyond these Baptist-focused works, historians writing about Keach's more famous contemporary, John Bunyan, have provided some additional insight and information about the Baptist community of which Keach and Bunyan were each a part.[16] Baptists also feature in a variety of other works on nonconformity Restoration Britain, but a more substantial and comprehensive history of Baptists during this period has yet to be written.

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[13] Stephen Wright, *The Early English Baptists* (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2006).
[14] B.R. White, *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century* (London: The Baptist Historical Society, 1983), 92-138.
[15] Murdina MacDonald, "London Calvinistic Baptists 1689-1727: Tensions Within a Dissenting Community under Toleration" (PhD diss., Regents Park College, Oxford, 1982).
[16] See for instance Michael Mullett, *John Bunyan in Context* (Keele University Press: Keele Straffordshire, 1996); Richard Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

While this dissertation cannot fill the gap of providing a history of Restoration Baptists, it is intended to give an account of how Baptists in London, and Benjamin Keach in particular, made sense of their experiences during that time. A study of Keach's life and writings during this period indicate that he had a clear sense of how he and his coreligionists fit into the political and religious landscape of the Restoration. He expressed in various terms how he saw Baptists relating to other nonconformists, to conforming members of the established church, and to the international struggle between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. He also worked to define the boundaries of what members of his own group ought to believe, and how they ought to worship. All of these features, taken together, are what is meant by "Baptist identity" for our purposes here.

One curious point is that, while the topic at hand is Keach's conception of Baptist identity, he by and large did not refer to his coreligionists as "Baptists." The only occasion where he can be said to have used that name in particular is in a letter that he signed, along with seventeen other Baptists during the reign of William III.[17] This fact is less curious, however, than it might at first appear. The term "Baptist" began appearing in print in the 1650s to refer to congregations that opposed infant baptism. John Goodwin referred to them as "new Baptists," while James Parnell and one R.F. among others preferred to use some variation of "the people called Baptists."[18] Nonetheless, into the Restoration many references to the Baptists would continue to refer to them as "Anabaptists" (particularly hostile references), while from time to time Baptists, Keach

[17]Richard Adams and Benjamin Keach, "Lyn Persecution Letter from Benjamin Keach and Richard Adams to Richard Kent" (Whitchurch Collection, C.17, Angus Library, Regents Park College, Oxford).
[18] John Goodwin, *Water-dipping no firm footing for Church-communion: or Considerations proving it not simply lawful, but necessary also* (1653), 20, 29; R. F. *Truth cleared of scandals, or truth lifting up its head above scandals, &c. Occasioned by the meeting of those people called Baptists, and those whom the world scornfully calleth Quakers* (1654); James Parnell, *The watcher: or, The stone cut out of the mountains without hands, striking at the feet of the image* (1655).

included, used the term "Baptized believers."[19] As late as 1712 Benjamin Stinton would opt for "Anti-Paedobaptists," and even in 1738, Thomas Crosby in his *History of the English Baptists* felt it necessary to explain his rationale for using the name "Baptist" as opposed to the other alternatives.[20]

In the absence of Keach providing a clear definition of "Baptist," or even using the term, how does one locate his sense of identity as a Baptist? By and large, this is to be found in his writings and how he located himself with respect to other groups. In these sources, it is apparent that there were three main components to Keach's Baptist identity. These were a sense of Protestant orthodoxy, an awareness of and opposition to religious persecution, and an eschatological framework that gave his worldview a sense of order. At times he may have emphasized the experience of dissent in a way that seemed to make common cause with dissenters as a group, while at other times he appeared as a Protestant with a capital "P" to rally against popery, and in both cases he may have de-emphasized the differences in belief between himself and other protestants (albeit never to the point of flirting with comprehension into the Church of England). But while "Baptist" as a specific title was frequently in the background, the three main components of Keach's identity as a Baptist were consistent throughout the forty years of his public career.

In developing a sense of religious orthodoxy, Keach and his coreligionists played something of a double game. On the one hand, they made their opposition to and

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[19] For example: Henry Adis, *A declaration of a small society of baptized believers, undergoing the name of Free-willers, about the city of London* (London: Printed for the Author, 1660); Keach, *Laying on of hands upon baptized believers, as such, proved an ordinance of Christ in answer to Mr. Danvers's former book* (London: Printed by Benjamin Harris, 1698); Joseph Hooke, *A necessary apology for the baptized believers* (London: Printed by R. Tookey, 1701).

[20] Benjamin Stinton, "A Repository of Divers Materials Relating to the English Anti-Paedobaptists," Angus Library, Regents Park College, Oxford; Thomas Crosby, *The history of the English Baptists, from the Reformation to the beginning of the reign of King George I*, Vol. 1 of 4 (London: 1738), vii-viii.

separation from the Church of England on specific matters quite clear. They wrote extensive about their objections to infant Baptism by sprinkling of water in favour of adult, believer's baptism by immersion, and warned of other dangers of formalism, ordinances, and what Keach called in one instance "Romish fragments," which may be taken as oblique references to ordinances of the Church of England.[21] On the other hand, Baptists would also emphasize their adherence to scripture and the more conventional reformed beliefs they held regarding salvation and Christology, in particular in opposition to Quakers. They also advocated for toleration, while emphasizing that their dissent was based on matters of conscience, but in matters that were not so significant that they should earn the hostility of their fellow protestants in the Church of England and elsewhere. The bottom line of Keach's understanding of orthodoxy was that Baptists were another variety of loyal English Protestants, unobjectionable on account of their adherence to ordinances of the scripture and their consistency with the history of English Protestantism. This understanding is reflected, for instance, in the London Baptist Confessions of 1689, to which Keach subscribed.

At the same time that he sought to draw upon a sense of orthodoxy, Keach was always aware of the fact that, to many commentators, Baptists were anything but orthodox. Rather, a prevailing attitude towards Keach and his coreligionists was that they were radical and seditious, and as such they were variously persecuted during the Restoration. The experience of persecution, and the appeal for toleration, was thus from the outset an integral aspect of how Keach presented himself and understood his own place in his historical context. From his 1664 trial, in which he attempted to play the role

[21] Benjamin Keach, *Sion in Distress or, the Groans of the Protestant Church* (London: Printed by George Larkin, for Enoch Prosser, 1681), 22.

of a suffering saint, to the later histories written by his sons-in-law, which depicted the Restoration as a period of heroic endurance by Baptist martyrs, the persecuted Baptist was a key image. Even Keach's allegorical works about Christian living saw the godly persecuted at every term. In a sense, the experience of persecution helped to confirm the truth of his beliefs and the righteousness of his cause.

Finally, the Baptist's place in the world and relationship with other groups was ultimately to be understood through a grand eschatological framework. This basic narrative of a conflict between Christ and Antichrist provided both a broad historical context through which Keach understood his experiences, and an immediate sense of urgency, as he perceived the approach of a turning point in that contest. While an eschatological conflict allowed him to see change approaching over the horizon, it also reinforced the importance of his protestant orthodoxy and persecution. The stakes of right belief in the face of a final, apocalyptic judgement were all the more important. The London Baptist Confessions had a significant apocalyptic emphasis, which they shared with the Savoy Declaration of 1658, and so Keach and his fellow Baptists had a belief grounded in these high stakes.[22] Likewise, persecution was to be expected of a true church in the final days before Antichrist's overthrow, which imbued the suffering of Baptists with a greater purpose. The conflict against the false church would also make the differences between fellow Protestants seem less important, an implicit argument in favour of toleration.

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[22] James N. Anderson, "A Tabular Comparison of the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith, the 1658 Savoy Declaration of Faith, the 1677/1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith and the 1742 Philadelpha Confession of Faith," last modified 2007, http://www.proginosko.com/docs/wcf_sdfo_lbcf.html. Chapter XXXI and XXXII of both Savoy and the London Baptist Confessions are "Of the State of Man and of the Resurrection of the Dead" and "Of the Last Judgement" respectively.

As we shall see, Keach would be consistent in holding these views, but at various stages of his life he would be more focused on one of these aspects of his identity than on the others. To that end, the following five chapters are organized chronologically, but each chapter is also focused on one or two topics rather than dealing with all the events of a given period of time. The chapters span Keach's career from the 1660s to the 1690s, with a fifth chapter that deals largely with writings from 1712 to 1739, after Keach's death in 1704. Each chapter deals mainly with events and writings from a given decade, though they occasionally refer to later or earlier events that are best discussed with respect to the thematic focus of the chapter, regardless of chronology.

Chapter 1 focuses on a single event: Keach's 1664 trial at the assizes in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. In this trial, Keach was sentenced to the pillory for having written a children's primer that was contrary to the Act of Uniformity (1662), and copies of his book were burned. As an event, Keach's trial and punishment were minor, but a discussion of the case provides a point of departure from which the situation of Baptists in the 1660s can be discussed more generally. First, the manner in which the judge treated the accused on account of his religion, and the manner in which he characterized him and his beliefs, reflects the prevailing attitudes towards and common depiction of Baptists at the outset of the Restoration. Secondly, Keach's book, which was used as evidence against him, gives an indication of the points of contention that Keach and other Baptists had against the Church of England, and the issues of faith for which they were willing to expose themselves to the threat of trial. Thirdly, Keach's conduct at trial and during his punishment, and his efforts to present himself, not as a criminal but as a persecuted

Christian, serve as one example amongst others of how Baptists and other nonconformists attempted to make the case for their own toleration.

Chapter 2 moves on to the 1670s, and deals in some detail with an extended dispute between Particular Baptists and Quakers in London. The disagreement, which began with the Baptist Thomas Hicks attacking the Quakers in print, continued with public disputations between the two groups, and concluded with each side producing more printed polemics against one another, including Keach's *Grand Imposter Discovered* (1675). All of these disputations, in short, sought to present the Quakers as being erroneous in their beliefs regarding the authority of scripture, soteriology, and the nature of Christ. This chapter thus deals with the disagreements between the Baptists and another group of nonconformists, whom they viewed as being beyond the pale of mainstream Protestantism. Given that the Baptists and Quakers were often lumped together in hostile publications, this hostility may be seen as indicating the Baptists' efforts to distinguish themselves from an unflattering association. It may also be seen as an example of the Baptists' efforts to attach themselves to a sense of Protestant orthodoxy, and separate themselves from other, more radical branches of nonconformity.

Chapter 3 deals in greater detail with Keach's poetry and his works on eschatology in the 1680s. If, in the Baptists' disputes against the Quakers, they sought to make the soundness of their beliefs clear, Keach's works against sin and the Antichrist demonstrated the ultimate stakes of such sound beliefs. This chapter discusses Keach's anxieties concerning "carnal" forms and worldly desires, with which diabolical forces prey upon sinners, and his efforts, through his writings, to lead his readers away from sin. The ultimate manifestation of such sin, however, was the Antichrist, which Keach

identified as the Papacy, and which he saw as the animating force behind persecution and popish plots in England, culminating with the Glorious Revolution which overthrew (in Keach's estimation) a Popish tyrant, namely James II. Chapter 3 thus depicts the basic, apocalyptic worldview through which Keach understood his place in the world, from the daily temptations to sin to the final conflict between the true church and the false.

Following the Glorious Revolution, with which the third chapter ends, Chapter 4 deals with Keach's disputes with other Baptists and nonconformists in the 1690s. With the more immediate concerns of persecution and toleration having been pushed aside after 1689, Keach's emphasis in the last fourteen years of his life turned to issues of orthodoxy and ordinances among Baptists, and within his own congregation. A lengthy dispute over the singing of hymns at Keach's Horselydown congregation, which saw him defending hymns as a scriptural ordinance rather than popish formality, was one of these disputes. Another was Keach's preaching against what he regarded as a creeping threat of Arminianism, and a defence of Calvinist soteriology rooted in confessions of faith dating back to the *Westminster Confession*. Thus Chapter 4 sees Keach working to better establish the contours of a Baptist orthodoxy, avoiding the Scylla and Charybdis of salvation by works on one side, and rejection of scriptural ordinances on the other.

In the final chapter, Chapter 5, the topic is Baptist confessional history, the first real examples of which Keach's sons in law Benjamin Stinton and Thomas Crosby wrote after his death. What is clear from their efforts, as well as in certain of Keach's own writings, is that the history of the Baptists was one that they sought to tie closely to the history of Protestantism in England, and the various persecutions that were dramatized in

works like John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*.[23] The Baptist authors continued to advocate for greater toleration, and to make a common cause with other Protestants by drawing upon a shared history and shared origins. Their depiction of Baptists, Keach included, in the seventeenth century presents a historical narrative in which they are martyrs enduring a persecuting age, while Crosby's *History of the English Baptists* also sought to establish the correctness of Baptist beliefs about Baptism by dating them back to John Wycliffe and other predecessors to the Reformation. Baptist history thus drew upon the same sense of orthodox and opposition to persecution that Keach had depicted in his lifetime.

The three main themes of Baptist identity, then, are variously depicted in the different stages of Keach's life. He and other Baptists would emphasize their orthodoxy in the primer and the confessions of faith of the 1660s, would defend it against Quakers in the 1670s, and would argue about it amongst themselves in the 1690s. They would defend themselves against persecution at trial and in print, denounce it as the work of Antichrist, and when it came time for Crosby to write his history, the struggle against persecution under the Stuart Kings defined the whole work. Keach's eschatological framework provided moreover both a means of explaining the hardship that Baptists suffered, and a certain anticipation of imminent.

While this dissertation's focus on Benjamin Keach allows for an exploration of a coherent and consistent sense of identity in a specific period of time, this approach also has some limitations. The first of these is, of course, the fact that the subject is an individual. Keach's beliefs and attitudes were frequently shared by other Baptists, who

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[23] John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perilous dayes, touching matters of the Church* (London: Printed for John Day, 1563).

expressed their agreement in print and through their actions, but given the personal nature of identity, the Baptist identity explored here cannot be taken to be monolithic. Rather, it should be understood as a basic framework, the specifics of which other Baptists of the period would often dispute. The second issue that this dissertation does not deal with extensively is the topic of class, or the social position of the Baptists. In short, the materials consulted over the course of research for this dissertation did not provide sufficient grounds for such a sustained discussion, and as such any issues of class that appear have been necessarily of secondary importance. Thus, while a lengthier discussion of class in Baptist congregations may prove illuminating, it will not be found here.

Similarly, though Chapter 4 does include a discussion of gender in Baptist congregations, specifically with regard to the conspicuous presence of women, a more extensive discussion of gender would doubtlessly be profitable, and has been played out to various degrees in the secondary sources. With these specific limitations having been stated, the reader will understand what this dissertation is not. What it is, simply stated, is a study of Benjamin Keach that aims to provide a better understanding of how post-Reformation Baptists understood themselves and their faith in a particular historical context. To that end, Chapter 1 will begin with the subject's less than fortuitous entry into public life with the Trial of Benjamin Keach.

Chapter 1: The Trial of Benjamin Keach, 1664

Details of Benjamin Keach's early life are sparse, outside of the fact that he was born in Buckinghamshire in 1640. Given that, unlike many of his contemporaries among the nonconformists, he did not provide anything like a spiritual autobiography or memoir; his own works have only passing references to his earlier spiritual and intellectual development. Some of the writers have taken on the topic of Keach's early life, most notably Austin Walker, who explains that Keach was influenced early on by the Independent minister Matthew Meade, and by army chaplain John Saltmarsh in his 1646 work *Free Grace: or the flowing of Christ's Blood freely to Sinners*. As Walker presents it, the freedom of the 1650's and the context of the Civil War and Interregnum seems to have been essential in shaping Keach's experiences in accepting the central importance of direct readings of scripture.[1] Keach's early development during the Interregnum might well be an interesting topic for study and speculation, but given that this dissertation seeks to place him in the context of the Restoration, we will instead begin with a discussion of his first entry into public life. However free he may have been to explore different forms of dissent during his youth in the Interregnum, when we first encounter the adult Keach in the sources his experience is one of religious persecution in the newly restored monarchy.

At age twenty-four, Keach appears in the record after having been arrested and put on trial at the Assizes in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, in October 1664. His arrest appears briefly in the Stuart State Papers, reported by one Thomas Disney, who states that Keach received assistance from his family members in producing and distributing a

[1] Austin Walker, *The Excellent Benjamin Keach*, (Dundas, On: Joshua, 2004), 44, 50, 52-60.

seditious book.[2] At his trial, Chief Justice Robert Hyde presiding, Keach was charged with "having wrote a little book entitled, 'The Child's Instructor; or, A New and Easy Primer' in which ere contained several things contrary to the doctrine and ceremonies of the church of England."[3] A transcript of this trial, the origins of which are a mystery, was first published as a part of the first edition of the *State Tryals*, in 1719, and was then included in each subsequent publication of the "State Trials," the best known and most extensive edition of which was published in several volumes between 1809 and 1826. The record of the trial was also preserved in a manuscript, apparently collected by Keach's son-in-law Benjamin Stinton before the year 1712, which differs in some important particulars from the printed version and which will receive a more substantial discussion in Chapter 5. For the moment, we will focus our attention on the events of the trial itself.

From the outset of the trial, Justice Hyde took a dim view of Keach's character. He described him as being a "seditious, heretical, and schismatical person…disaffected to his majesty's government," and stated that on the first of May he did "write, print, publish, or cause to be written, printed, and published, one seditious and venomous

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[2] "Thos. Disney to Luke Wilkes," May 16, 1664, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reign of Charles II, 1663-1664, preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office. Ed. Mary Anne Everett Green. Vol. 3: Jan 1663-Aug 1664*, (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1862), 595 [Document Reference Number: SP 29/98 f.226]

[3] *A Compleat Collection of State-Tryals, and Proceedings upon Impeachments for High Treason, and other Crimes and Misdemeanours; from the reign of King Henry the Fourth, to The End of the Reign of Queen Anne*, Vol. 1, (London: Printed for Timothy Goodwin, John Walthoe, Benjamin Tooke, John Darby, Jacob Tonson, and John Walthoe, 1719), 1017. See also, "The Trial of Mr. Benjamin Keach, at the Assizes at Aylsbury, in Buckinghamshire, for a Libel: 17 Charles II A.D. 1665" in Cobbett et el, *Cobbett's Complete collection of state Trials and proceedings for high treason and other crimes and misdemeanors*, (London : Printed by T.C. Hansard, published by R. Bagshaw, 1809-1826), Vol. 6, 701. While the trials are identical save for a footnote in the Cobbett/Howell edition, the 1719 *State Tryals* version will be the version quoted and referred to in footnotes throughout. For further clarification, Sir Robert Hyde was the first cousin of Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon, and he is referred to as "Chief Justice Hyde" on account of his famous cousin having secured his elevation to chief justice of common pleas in 1663: Wilfrid Prest, "Hyde, Sir Robert (1595/6–1665)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14334, (accessed 22 Feb 2016).

book."[4] Keach pleaded not guilty. His defence was that there was a lack of evidence that he had written the whole of the book and "caused" it to be printed as such. He also made an effort to speak about the content of the book in order to clear himself of the claim that the work was "seditious and venomous," but he was immediately silenced by Chief Justice Hyde, who declared that Keach "shall not preach here, nor give the Reasons of your Damnable Doctrine, to seduce and infect his Majesty's subjects."[5] In order to establish the facts of the case, namely that Keach's book had been in violation of the Act of Uniformity, the offending passages of his book were compared against passages from the book of Common Prayer, and witnesses testified to having found many copies of the work in his home, evidently for purpose of distribution.[6] While Hyde silenced Keach on matters of religion and stated that the trial was limited to "Matters of fact," he did not limit his own commentary in a like fashion. When Keach attempted to speak about his religion, Hyde answered that "I know your religion, you are a Fifth Monarchy Man," slandering him with association with radical millenarians who had rebelled in London in 1661.[7] Likewise he cast some aspersions on Keach for his social status and trade (he was a tailor), saying that he had stepped outside of his proper sphere, and demanded of Keach, "What have you to do to take other men's trade out of their hands?"[8]

Keach was found guilty and sentenced to the pillory. While he was punished, his books were burned. This is where Keach's narrative concludes in the *State Tryals*. But other sources, specifically Thomas Crosby's 1738 *History of the English Baptists* and the collection of manuscripts upon which it was based, expand upon the story. They tell us

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[4] *State Tryals,* Vol. 1, 1017.
[5] *State Tryals,* Vol. 1, 1017
[6] *State Tryals,* Vol. 1, 1018-1019
[7] *State Tryals,* Vol. 1, 1019
[8] *State Tryals,* Vol. 1, 1017

that Keach, on the way to his punishment, calmly assured his friends that "the Cross is the way to the Crown," and describe how, upon his arrival at the pillory, he began to preach.[9] Though he was briefly quieted by the jailor, Keach "pull'd his *Bible* out of his pocket, and held it up to the people," claiming he could sustain all he wrote through scripture, "if I had an opportunity." Moreover, the crowd apparently took Keach's side against a priest they denounced as a drunkard when "all the people fell to laughing; and turn'd their diversion from the sufferer in the pillory to the *drunken priest.*"[10] In presenting this expanded story, the Baptist histories present the event as an account of heroic endurance of religious persecution, in which the state's own mechanisms of retribution, far from silencing the preacher, give him a veritable pulpit. On one point both narratives of Keach's punishment agree: "He was never brought to make a recantation."[11]

As a launch pad for a discussion of a Baptist's experiences in the Restoration, Keach's trial is ideal. It contains three elements that are crucial to understanding the context of Baptists within Restoration nonconformity. First, the charges themselves and the conduct of the judge are indicative of contemporary perceptions of and anxieties about the Baptists as a group. Secondly, the issues at stake in terms of what Keach wrote that were "contrary to the doctrine and ceremonies of the church of England" provide a sense of the points upon which Baptists chose to dissent, and should be set in the context of the confessions of faith that Baptists produced during the decade of the 1660s. Thirdly, Keach's defence and his self-presentation as a defendant provide an excellent example of the kinds of rhetoric and performance that Baptists, and other dissenters, gave in their

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[9] Benjamin Stinton, "A Repository of Divers Materials Relating to the English Anti-Paedobaptists," Angus Library, Oxford, 102.
[10] Thomas Crosby, *The history of the English Baptists, from the Reformation to the beginning of the reign of King George I*, Vol. 2 (London: 1738), 205-206.
[11] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1020.

pleas for toleration and freedom of conscience. Of course, the trial of one man is inadequate to explain the experiences of a larger group, and so Keach's trial will be examined throughout this chapter in parallel with the experiences of his contemporaries, and relevant publications of Baptists, conformists, and dissenters

Persecution and Perceptions: Baptists in the 1660s

Keach's trial presents to us two conflicting narratives being performed in tandem. These narratives are not simply owing to their different sources, as the performances are played out in both. These contrasting depictions of events seek to impress upon their audience both Keach's and Hyde's messages in the immediate context of the trial and its later publication. Each has a story to tell about the identity of the accused and what is happening to him. On the one hand, we have the story that Chief Justice Hyde wants to present: Keach is a seditious, unruly preacher and he is being punished for committing a crime. On the other hand, we have the story that the minister himself would like to present: that of a Christian who is cruelly persecuted for his faith. These performances are implicit in the actual trial, and are further re-enacted in the later printed versions of his trial. The stakes of these performances are not limited to the individual case of Keach himself. They characterize both nonconformity and the Restoration state more broadly. For the moment, we will examine Hyde's account, before returning to Keach's performance in the final section of the chapter.

Simply stated, Hyde's perceptions of Keach reflect contemporary establishment perceptions of Baptists as a seditious and radical group. As we have seen, Hyde prevented Keach from speaking about the actual content of his book, or defending the substance of his beliefs. Instead, Hyde presumed Keach's doctrines to be "venomous"

and likely to "seduce and infect," as if they were a contagious disease in need of quarantine. This depiction of dissent as a disease was hardly unprecedented, given that the most noted work on religious heresies in the seventeenth century was Thomas Edwards's appropriately titled book, *Gangraena*.[12] John Marshall's work *John Locke, Toleration, and Early Enlightenment Culture* likewise records gangrene and poison being associated with Quakers and monstrous births with New England heretics like Anne Hutchinson.[13] But, antipathy to Keach's beliefs notwithstanding, Hyde insisted at one point that the subject of the trial was simply to ascertain the "matter of fact" of whether or not Keach did, on 1 May 1664, "write, print, publish, or cause to be written, printed, and published, one seditious and venomous book."[14] Even while Keach's trial was entirely centred upon his religious errors, the errors themselves were not a matter for legal debate, but only the fact that he wrote them. Put differently, errors were not the subject of the trial, but the writing of errors.

The legal fiction that English subjects were not put on trial for their religion had been in place from Elizabethan times, as Peter Lake and Michael Questier have demonstrated in their work on the execution of Catholic recusants.[15] Nonetheless, any such pretense that the crime with which Keach was charged was not based on his religion quickly evaporates with the observation that the charge Hyde read out declared the

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[12] Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, or, A catalogue and discovery of many of the errours, heresies, blasphemies and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years* (London: Printed for Ralph Smith, 1646).
[13] John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration, and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 295-296.
[14] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1019
[15] Peter Lake with Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 230-244. Questier and Lake maintain that, rather than representing an attempt by the state to "dramatise and confirm its power through a Foucauldian horror show," trial and punishment (and potential repentance) were more concerned with providing a performance that would "vindicate the justice and mercy with which…treason was punished." (238)

content of his book to be "to the great displeasure of Almighty God." But, rather than making God's displeasure the central issue of the trial, Hyde quickly added that the primer tended towards, "the disaffection of the king's people to his majesty's government, the danger of the peace of this kingdom."[16] The danger represented by Keach's writing, then, was not simply religious error but civil rebellion rooted in sectarian heresy. When Keach asked "Is my religion so bad, that I may not be allowed to speak?" the judge fired back back that "I know your religion, you are a Fifth Monarchy Man; and you can preach, as well as write books; and you will preach here, if I would let you: but I shall take such order as you shall do no more mischief."[17] Hyde thus treated both Keach's writing and his speaking as sources of disorder and "mischief." Attempts to silence the preacher both at trial and at the pillory, where the *State Trials* account reports (in contrast to the accounts of Stinton and Crosby) that he "was denied the liberty of speaking to his spectators" and was to have his books burned before him, display a real anxiety about allowing Keach's words to be heard or read. If dissent was a contagious disease, spread by the written and spoken word, its symptoms could amount to open rebellion, especially in the immediate context of the 1660s.[18]

In the early 1660s, the suspected sedition of Baptists and other dissenters was readily connected with the millenarian beliefs of Fifth Monarchy. This context explains Hyde's denunciation of Keach as a "Fifth Monarchy Man." The short-lived revolt in London by Thomas Venner and his fellow Fifth Monarchists in 1661 brought concerns over radical dissent to the fore, and a hostile reaction from the authorities was immediate. Stinton records that, while they disavowed any connection to Venner's rising, many

[16] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1018.
[17] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1019.
[18] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1020.

Baptists were arrested and ill-used early in the Restoration.[19] In a contemporary pamphlet that Stinton later included in his repository, *Behold, a Cry! or, A True Relation of the Inhumane and Violent Outrages of divers Souldiers, Constables, and others*, the anonymous author complained of abuse by "Mercinary men, of the ruder and viler sort." The author likewise places blame upon ministers who "incourage them in their wicked Wayes…and tell them that others be *Hereticks, Schismaticks, Separatists, Phanaticks* and what not."[20]

The complaints of the Baptists in the 1660s included petitions such as *Sion's Groans for Her Distres'd*, which carried the signatures of numerous London Baptist leaders. If these Baptists were motivated by a fear of persecution, it was with good reason. Richard Greaves records that during the post-Venner reaction "Some 400 Baptists and 500 Quakers were arrested in London alone."[21] From Greaves's research it is furthermore clear that Baptists, along with Quakers, were particular targets in the periodic crackdowns of the decade following 1661. During a 1670 campaign against dissent in the London area, the prominent Particular Baptists William Kiffin and Hanserd Knollys were arrested in May and summer respectively, while a number of preachers were incarcerated for refusing to take oaths and others, including Quaker George Fox, were fined for preaching.[22]

These persecutions did not merely reflect the prejudice of individual constables, judges, or justices of the peace. In the context of the post-Venner reaction against the

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[19] Stinton, "A Repository," 85-86.
[20] Anon., *Behold a Cry! or, A True Relation of the Inhumane and Violent Outrages of divers Souldiers, Constables, and others, practiced upon many of the Lord's People, commonly (though falsly) called Anabaptists* (London: 1662), 3, 10.
[21] Richard Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil: The Radical Underground in Britain, 1660-1663* (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 57-58.
[22] Richard Greaves, *Enemies Under his Feet, Radicals and Nonconformists in Britain, 1664-1677* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 159-60.

more radical elements of nonconformity, the identification of groups like Baptists and Quakers with Fifth Monarchism came from the very top. Within a week of the rebels having been arrested, a proclamation was published under the name of the King himself. This proclamation against "*unlawful and seditious meetings*" clearly identified its targets as "divers persons (known by the name of Anabaptists and Quakers, Fifth-Monarchy-men…as a mark of distinction and separation) [who] under pretence of serving God, do daily meet in great numbers in secret places, and unusual times." It went on to say that the religious meetings of these groups served "to settle a perfect correspondency and confederacy between themselves, of which some evil Effects have already ensured, even to the disturbance of the publique peace by Insurrection and Murther."[23] Baptists, Quakers, and Fifth Monarchists were presented in this proclamation as a triad of conspiring dissenters, all essentially the same despite their pretensions to the contrary, and all united in their goal of sedition and rebellion.

While the association of Baptists with seditious fanaticism fit within the immediate context of a post-Venner response, it also drew on a longer tradition. Crosby's Baptist history observed the use of "Anabaptist" as an indiscriminate term of abuse against dissenters from the sixteenth century onwards, noting that the name was used against heretics and criminals, "To render the name of *Anabaptist* yet more odious."[24] Similar conflation for the purpose of increasing the disrepute of dissenters may be seen in the categorization and listing of Thomas Edwards in his *Gangraena* during the English

[23] England and Wales. Sovereign (Charles II), *By the King. A proclamation, prohibiting all unlawful and seditious meetings and conventicles under pretence of religious worship* (London: Printed by John Bill, 1661).
[24] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, l. See, e.g., the Preface, chap. 8, to Richard Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* (London: John Windet, 1593). Crosby's suggestion that criminals were called Anabaptists to bring disrepute upon Baptists fits into his overall account, but it seems more likely that criminals were abused with that name because "Anabaptist" was already a great slur.

Civil Wars, and would also be used by conformist writers such as Sir Roger L'Estrange in the Restoration. Anne Hughes, in her study of *Gangraena*, describes the work as possessing a broad and poorly organized account of heresy. She observes that, "lack of differentiation was central to Edwards's overall approach. If error led inexorably to worse heresy, blasphemy, and schism, making neat distinctions was simply a time-wasting diversion from the struggle against truth."[25] Jonathan Scott seems to be in agreement as he writes that "to understand what Edwards was seeing…we must recover what appeared to him a 'wildernesse', a 'rude and undigested Chaos.'" These phrases of Edwards's perfectly encapsulate the threat of an unsettled and unsettling religious climate with which he and later, sympathetic commentators like Roger L'Estrange were presented.[26]

L'Estrange, the licenser of the press and crucial Tory propagandist of the Popish Plot and Exclusion crisis, followed Edwards's tactic to the letter. Whether he was consciously drawing upon Edwards is uncertain, though *Gangraena* is found in many of his contemporaries' collections and Hughes confirms it, "was widely available for polemicists and scholars throughout the seventeenth century," used in particular by conformist writers like William Assheton and William Dugdale.[27] Even if we cannot state with certainty that L'Estrange was taking his cues from *Gangraena*, the evocative description Mark Goldie gives of his Popish Plot writings makes the similarities sing:

> This was politics by thesaurus, in which torrential litanies constructed kaleidoscopes of associative guilt. Adamites, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Arians, Brownists, Catharists, Enthusiasts, Familists, Fifth Monarchists, Millenarians, Muggletonians, Muncerians, Quakers, Presbyterians, Ranters, Seekers, Socinians, 'and 150 sects besides', are the names of the crazed fragments of polytheistic

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[25] Anne Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 93-94.
[26] Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 239.
[27] Hughes, *Gangraena*, 422-423, 424.

pseudo-Protestancy.[28]

The forming of "kaleidoscopes of associative guilt" is an apt description of L'Estrange's and Edwards's shared goal.

The 1681 broadsheet *The Committee, or, Popery in Masquerade*, with which L'Estrange is credited, helps to illustrate his view of the unity and shared sedition of dissenters. In this image a Quaker and "Anabaptist" (the latter holding a dagger) share a long table with others labelled Muggletonian, Ranter, Presbyter, Fifth Monarchist, Nailorite and Adamite. They have thrown Magna Carta and the Holy Bible to the floor, and an agreement between Scottish Covenanters and English Parliamentarians in 1643, while a mob calls for "Thorough Reformation" and the Pope looks on saying "courage mes enfants."[29] The scene, of course, is chaotic and alludes to the chaos of the 1640s with references to petitions, "root and branch," and the Solemn League and Covenant, but in spite of this disorder the unified cause of sedition is apparent. The purpose of this conflation of various nonconformists was to demonstrate, even through their disunity, the unity of their common mania.

Such broad associations also characterized Daniel Featley's anti-Baptist *The Dipper Dipt* (1648), a new edition of which was published in 1660. Featley grouped the Baptists "with a rabble of Heretiques" including Jesuits, Polygamists, and Adamites.[30] The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* describes *The Dipper Dipt* as "by far the most successful of Featley's controversial writings" and its influence was such that it was being referenced decades later. Its impact may be seen in such attacks on the Baptists as

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[28] Goldie, "L'Estrange," 68.
[29] Roger L'Estrange, *The Committee, or, Popery in Masquerade* (London: 1680). This image is referred to in Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 139.
[30] Daniel Featley, *The Dippers dipt. Or, The Anabaptists Duck'd and Plung'd Over Head and Eares, at a Disputation in Southwark* (London: Nicholas Bourn and Richard Royston, 1646), Epistle.

Whitehead's *The Dipper Plung'd* and the anonymous Popish Plot ballad *The Leacherous Anabaptist* (alternative title, *The Dipper Dipt*), aimed at Francis Smith, among others.[31] Not unlike Edwards in his approach, Featley compares varieties of heresy to wild animals that, "meeting at the rivers to drink, engender one with another, and beget strange Monsters," and so nonconformity appears as a disordered bestial orgy.[32]

These sorts of attacks on Baptists were not simply empty pieces of rhetoric. They could have very real consequences for Baptists who found themselves grouped among the more "radical" aspects of the mid-century, earning them, perhaps disproportionately, the attention of and harsh treatment by Restoration authorities. Indeed, soon after Blome's book, Venner's rising gave occasion for Thomas Ellis to write *The Traytors Unvailed.* This small publication placed blame on the London Baptists, particularly Keach's later friend and associate Hanserd Knollys, and contended that Knollys and fellow "Anabaptist" prisoners at Newgate were complicit in the plot and soon thereafter violently attacked their keepers during a lawful search.[33] In this context, Chief Justice Hyde's ready identification of Keach as "a Fifth Monarchy Man" three years later had a

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[31] Arnold Hunt, "Featley, Daniel (1582–1645)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9242, accessed 5 Jan 2016); *The Leacherous Anabaptist, or, The Dipper Dipt. A New Protestant Ballad* (London: Benjamin Harris, 1681). A simple key-word search through Early English Books Online, while not decisive, reveals that "Dipper" is used frequently after Featley's publication as a pejorative or simple descriptor of Baptists. His book itself receives a number of responses and is quoted or made reference to in several later publications. Other titles make plays off of his, for instance we have "*dippers sprinkled*" as part of the title of Geoffrey Watts's book, *A scribe, pharisee, hypocrite; and his letters answered, separates churched, dippers sprinkled* (London: Edward Dod and Thomas Johnson, 1657), and a similar jest in Thomas Toll's *The Dipper Drowned* (London: Peter Lillicrap, 1661), which specifies that the Baptist drowns when "endeavouring to wade into the unfathomable depths of Scripture."

[32] Featley, *Dippers Dipt*, 23

[33] Thomas Ellis [Identified as such by EEBO, but publication was anonymous], *The Traytors Unvailed, Or A Brief and true account of that horrid and bloody designe intended by those Rebellious People, known by the names of Anabaptists and Fifth Monarchy Being Upon Sunday the 14th of April 1661, in Newgate On purpose to oppose his Majesties person and Laws* (London: 1661), 5-6.

clear rationale, and his persecuting zeal in asserting that he would ensure that Keach would "do no more mischief" may be seen in light of a concern for public safety.

The hostility with which Keach and his coreligionists were met by authorities did not go unnoticed. Benjamin Stinton's manuscript account of the trial describes Hyde's bullying manner and comments that "This Threatining made Mr. K. & some of his Friends, who [w]ere unacquainted with the Laws in this case fear that he intended to have him hanged."[34] While Stinton may have added this last for dramatic effect, there is no reason to doubt that Hyde's hostility to his supposed Fifth Monarchism would have made an impression on Keach. In this respect, Keach was not alone. Owing to their association in the Conformist mind with such radical groups, and in keeping with their eagerness to be freed from such associations, Baptists made a number of efforts to represent their orthodoxy through apologia and confessions of faith. In so doing they brought particular attention to their differences from the Fifth Monarchist rebels of 1661.

Particular Baptist Henry Jessey wrote to dissociate himself from Venner and his rebellion, and John Tombes likewise wrote against Fifth Monarchists in his 1664 *Saints no Smiters: or, Smiting Civil Power not the Work of Saints*.[35] Tombes took a hard line against Fifth Monarchism, writing that "[there is no] doctrine more hellish, Antichristian and damnable than this, that tends to overthrow all the civil powers, Lawes, Doctrines, Forms, Degrees, Offices and Church and State."[36] Though a Baptist and a nonconformist himself, Tombes dedicated his work to the Earl of Clarendon and defended both the

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[34] Stinton, "A Repository," 100.
[35] Works referred to in C.E. Whiting, *Studies in English Puritanism from the Restoration to the Revolution, 1660-1688* (New York and Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1931), 88-89.
[36] John Tombes, *Saints no Smiters: Or, Smiting Civil Powers Not the Work of Saints. Being a Treatise, Shewing the Doctrine and Attempts of Quinto-Monarchians, or Fifth-Monarchy-Men About Smiting Powers, to be damnable and Antichristian*, (London: Printed by Henry Eversden, 1664), 62.

monarchy and the Oath of Royal Supremacy in a show of loyalty. Tombes further described a spectrum of dissent in which the more radical elements, like Fifth Monarchists and Quakers, are beyond the pale: "Seekers and Quakers, have in a Clamorous way like Scolds bespattered all that's oppost to them, with this reproach of Antichristian, and at last these *Fifth-Monarchy* men have furiously battered Civil powers, & all that belongs to them."[37]

Rejecting the outright hostility that such extreme dissenters directed at episcopacy and ordinances, Tombes painted his own confession as moderate and peaceful, quite unlike his radical opponents. His representation of dissent, moreover, placed Quakers and Fifth Monarchists alike on the more extreme end of the spectrum. The Quakers were taken to represent an extreme irregularity, even before Venner, in an apology Henry Adis penned on behalf of Baptists. This apology accepted that Quaker practices should justifiably be punished, while clearly denying that the Baptists behaved in any such way, or held any such beliefs.[38]

Further public appeals from Baptist churches in the aftermath of January 1661 would, like Tombes's work, distance themselves from the Fifth Monarchists. Thomas Grantham and his fellow ministers denounced the rebellion "as utterly Abominable, and held in great detestation in our Judgements and Principles," and protested the King's proclamation of 10 January for failing to distinguish between rebels and law-abiding

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[37] Tombs, *Saints no Smiters*, 2, 40.

[38] Henry Adis, *A Declaration of a Small Society of Baptized Believers, undergoing the name of Free Willers, about the City of London* (London: 1660). The relevant passage responds to the accusation that Baptists, aside from such faults as opposing the magistracy, also support the irregular practices of Quakers: "To this we answer, and God is our witness welle not, that we are so far from countenancing the *Quakers* or ourselves in any Irregular practice, as that if we ourselves be found in any such actings, we shall not violently oppose, but patiently subject to such penalties as the breach of such Laws cals for."

Baptists. "Shall the Righteous suffer with the Wicked? God forbid."[39] A similar broadsheet signed by twenty-six Baptists claimed that the failure to differentiate between law-abiding Baptists and rebels fanned popular prejudice and "doth strengthen the rude Multitude in their Confidence," and two apologies contained in the Stinton Repository protested that Fifth Monarchist beliefs are not the same as Baptist beliefs at all.[40]

Apologies such as these came from Lincoln and Kent as well as London, and from both General and Particular Baptists, who made no discernible effort to distinguish themselves from one another. In fact, one *Humble Apology* carried the names of Particular Baptists including William Kiffin, Henry Hills, John Spilsbury, as well as General Baptists like, Henry Denne, Thomas Lambe, and John Gosnold. The frontispiece announced that while the apology was printed by Henry Hills, it was sold by General Baptist Francis Smith, whose name appears with the rest, and as such this publication represented both a joint endeavour and a common apology on behalf of churches of both sorts.[41]

The *Humble Apology* expresses regret that "it is become enough to render any man criminal to be called an *Anabaptist*, or at least a ground sufficient to question his Loyalty and fidelity to the Kings Majesty," but acknowledges a responsibility for the

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[39] Thomas Grantham et al, *The Second Humble Addresse of those who are Called Anabaptists in the County of Lincoln. Presented to his Majesty, Charles the Second, King od England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, &c*. (London: 1661 [printed as 1660])

[40] Thomas Perrot et al, *To the King of these nations, The Humble Representation of Several Societies Commonly called by the Name Anabaptists* (London: 1661); Stinton, "A Repository," 72-78. See also William Jeffery, *The Humble Petition and Repreentation of the Sufferings of several Peaceable, and Innocent Subjects, Called by the Name of Anabaptists, Inhabitants of the County of Kent, and now Prisoners in the Gaol of Maidstone* (London: Printed for Francis Smith, 1661).

[41] William Kiffin, *The Humble Apology Of some commonly called Anabaptists, In behalf of themselves and others of the same Judgement with them: With their Protestation against the late wicked and most horrid treasonable Insurrection and Rebellion acted in the City of London* (London: Printed by Henry Hill, sold by Francis Smith, 1660). Because Early English Books Online attributes authorship to William Kiffin, I have followed this example, but the introductory epistle carries the names of all men.

Baptists to explain themselves and reassure the King.[42] The apology denies any connection between Baptist beliefs and the Fifth Monarchists, and denies in particular that the rebels even denied infant baptism.[43] They claim further that the rebels "have inveighed bitterly against us, as worshippers of the Beast," and that during the rebellion "such of us as were called thereunto (which were many) were ready to hazard our lives to suppress them."[44]

Within this same context the "Apologys of the People called Anabaptists" disavowed any desire to set Christ up as secular ruler, and produced an article of faith detailing obedience to the magistrate's worldly authority.[45] The General Baptists' "Standard Confession" of 1660 likewise categorically denied "divillish reports, and reproaches, falsly cast upon us, as though some of us (in & about the City of *London*) had lately gotten knives, hooked knives, & the like & great store of Arms besides…for the carrying out of some secret design." The confession, which was signed by thirty eight General Baptists including such notables as Francis Smith, Joseph Wright, Matthew Caffyn, and Thomas Monck, denounced those who spread such rumours but insisted that while faced with persecution the only recourse for the Baptists was "patiently to suffer whatsoever shall be inflicted upon us."[46] The General Baptists here shared with their Particular Baptist counterparts a desire to express their denomination's loyalty, as reflected also in the *Humble Apology*. In the immediate post-Venner context of the early 1660s, Baptists' statements of faith were keen to express the conventional, obedient

[42] Kiffin, *Humble Apology*, 6.
[43] Kiffin, *Humble Apology*, 7, 8.
[44] Kiffin, *Humble Apology*, 8, 9.
[45] Stinton, "A Repository," 76-78.
[46] William Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Chicago-Philadelphia-Los Angeles: The Judson Press, 1959), 234-35, 233.

positions of the congregations with respect to secular authorities, even while opposing the extension of that authority into spiritual matters.

Baptist Beliefs and Confessions of Faith, in Trial and Print

The efforts at Baptist apologia make it clear that the Baptist beliefs themselves, not only the prospect of revolt, were important in their persecution and their defence. Baptist beliefs were also at the centre of Keach's trial. That being the case, these beliefs ought to be accounted for here. While Keach was prohibited from speaking about his faith specifically, Chief Justice Hyde listed off a number of his religious errors while explaining that his book's contents "were contrary to the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, and so a Breach of the Act of Uniformity."[47] The charge against him, which Hyde read out to the court, included particular examples of the errors in question, "as, That infants ought not to be baptized; That laymen may preach the Gospel; That Christ shall reign personally on the earth in the latter days &c," and later the court Clerk read aloud relevant passages from the primer, in order to compare it to the Book of Common Prayer.[48] As we have seen, the validity of Keach's beliefs was not open to discussion, and by and large they were presented as being simply, and factually, contrary to the beliefs and practices of the Church of England. Nonetheless, Hyde could not seem to resist the urge to denounce and refute some of Keach's errors directly. In one outburst, he bemoaned the fact that Chist's personal rule on earth was "an old heresy…cast out of the Church a thousand years ago, and was likewise condemned by the Coucil of Constance about five hundred years ago, and hath lain dead ever since, till now this rascal hath revived it." He also expressed his shock at the implications of rejecting baptism for

[47] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1017.
[48] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1017, 1019.

infants, which by his appraisal meant that "the child of a Turk or Heathen is made equal with the child of a Christian."[49]

In short, Keach's writing was offensive to Hyde owing to his statements about laymen preaching, his eschatology, and his beliefs regarding Baptism. Unfortunately, there are no extant copies of the small book that so offended Hyde, and so what precisely Keach wrote cannot be examined in much detail. The book was, however, quoted at some length during the trial, and later on he wrote a similar book, published in 1704, titled *The Child's Delight*, which may give some indication as to the details contained in the first primer. Much of *The Child's Delight* consists of practical lessons such as currency, arabic and roman numerals, punctuation and examples of common documents such as a simple legal contract.[50] Nonetheless, religious content is ubiquitous: Keach teaches children about syllables by using terms like "blood-guil-ti-ness," "ba-by-lo-ni-ans," "A-bo-mi-na-ti-on," and so forth, and even the examples of different forms of punctuation are taken directly from the bible.[51]

Many of Keach's religious lessons in *The Child's Delight* would have been altogether unobjectionable to a Christian audience of any description. Such lessons include his "Child's Resolution," which is effectively a verse version of the Ten Commandments (for instance, on the First Commandment: "*No God but he, that formed me/I'll worship and obey*" and "*Images I, hate and defie/formed to represent/The Holy One: for there is none/His Figure can invent*").[52] We can see hints of the anti-clericalism, and opposition to Church of England ordinances that may have figured in the 1664

[49] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1019.
[50] Benjamin Keach, *The Child's Delight: or instructions for Children and Youth* (London: for William and Joseph Marshall, 1704), 54, 56, 69-72.
[51] Keach, *Child's Delight*, 7, 56.
[52] Keach, *Child's Delight*, 17.

primer in the 1704 version's Catechism, which describes Christ's role as Priest, King, and Prophet. Christ's role as Priest means that he fulfills the sacrifice of which the Jewish priest's ceremonies were a type, and "He has no Successor or Vicar, because he abides himself a Priest forever." His role as King means that "Nothing by any means ought to be done in God's Worship, but what is written in Holy Scripture."[53] There is nothing specifically stated as to the Church of England being erroneous on these points, the Catechism's attention being placed instead upon Roman Catholic errors; but the logic could readily be extended to apply to the established church as such. The section that was quoted during Keach's trial, on the other hand, was a good deal more direct, explaining as it did that "Christ hath not chosen the wise and prudent men after the flesh, not great doctors and rabbies…but rather the poor and despised, even tradesmen," and that Ministers "have not their learning and wisdom from men…universities, or human schools for human learning…but the gifts of God."[54] That Keach moderated his writing somewhat after thirty years (not to mention after having been arrested for his first venture into children's writing) is both possible and understandable. Nonetheless, we can begin to see the basic disagreements that Keach had with the Church of England.

The *Child's Delight* also addressed that other issue of which Hyde took note, Keach's views on eschatology and Christ's imminent return to rule on earth. The 1704 primer may have been more cautious in its discussion of the topic than his first book. While its Catechism did explain that "[Christ] shall have a glorious and visible Kingdom in the World, in the later days, which Kingdom he requires us to pray for, that it may come," Keach appears to have explicitly removed the longer, offending passage quoted in

[53] Keach, *Child's Delight*, 27-28, 29.
[54] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1019.

his trial before Hyde.[55] This passage had apparently included a description that "they shall hear that Sentence, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*: And so shall they reign with Christ on Earth a Thousand Years, *&c*."[56] Keach's enduring belief in some impending apocalyptic event was clearly expressed on more than one occasion in his publications after 1664. In 1666, his earliest poem, *Zion in Distress*, depicted the suffering of Protestant England under Babylonian, Antichristian Rome, and its imminent deliverance by Christ's return, a narrative that he refurbished and published again as *Sion in Distress, The Groans of the Protestant Church* in 1681.[57] In 1689, he returned to this topic again with *Distressed Sion Relieved*, which anticipated that God would make William III "*a hot scorching Sun/To thy grand foe, the Whore of Babylon.*"[58] Once again, Keach's views are recognizable in both versions of the primer, but appear to have been toned down by 1704. Keach's view of church ordinances, on the other hand, was much more consistent.

The *Child's Delight* identifies two ordinances of the church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both of these ordinances, according to Keach's description, are symbolic of different aspects of the New Testament. With respect to the Lord's Supper, Keach denounced the doctrine of Transubstantiation as "absurd, Blasphemous, and an Idolatrous Doctrine." He further explained that the Gospel's references to Christ's Body and Blood were "a Figurative speech" in much the same way as Christ said elsewhere that he was "a Vine, a Door, a Way; he is called a Star, a Rock, *&c*," and as such the Lord's Supper was

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[55] Keach, *Child's Delight*, 30.
[56] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1019.
[57] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, (London: 1666); Keach, *Sion in Distress: Or, The Groans of the Protestant Church* (London: Printed by George Larkin for Enoch Prosser, 1681).
[58] Benjamin Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved, or, The Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness* (London: Printed for Nath. Crouch at the Bible in the Poultrey near Cheapside, 1689), A5.

purely symbolic of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.[59] Similarly, Baptism was "instituted by Jesus Christ, to be unto the Party baptized, a Sign of his Fellowship with him, in his Death, Burial, and Resurrection…and of his giving up himself unto God thro' Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of Life."[60] These fundamental points, that Baptism was a symbol of burial and resurrection, and that it symbolized a decision to give oneself to Christ, are crucial to the Baptist conception of Believer's Baptism.

Given that the Baptists, by their very name, are closely identified with their beliefs regarding baptism, some further discussion of this belief is appropriate. Certainly their opposition to infant Baptism caught a good deal of attention from their opponents, as evidenced in Featley's creative pejorative, "Dippers," on account of the Baptist practice of baptizing by immersion. Thomas Edwards, naturally, sensationalized the matter with mention of recurring stories of Baptists baptizing horses, or, by one account "dressing up a Cat like a childe for to be baptized, inviting many people both men and women as to baptizing of a childe, and then when neighbours were come, having one to preach against baptizing of children."[61] Due to the centrality of this belief to the public profile of the Baptists, there were also occasional disputes in print over issues of Baptism during the Restoration, including a series of responses to Thomas Danvers's *Treatise on Baptism* in 1674.

The same main points, Believer's Baptism and the symbolic importance of baptism by immersion, are clearly recognizable in both Danvers's book, and in Keach's primer. Danvers, as was common among Baptist authors, emphasized the lack of scriptural examples for infant baptism. He quoted Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is

[59] Keach, *Child's Delight*, 39, 40-41.
[60] Keach, *Child's Delight*, 38.
[61] Hughes, *Gangraena*, 126

Baptized, shall be saved," and also drew on support from Acts 19, in which Paul asks disciples in Ephesus if they had "*received the Spirit since you believed?*" and, hearing a negative answer, "*he said, unto what then were you baptized?*"[62] From such examples, Danvers drew his conclusion that belief needed to precede baptism. He also explained that, because the primitive churches "were formed not of Ignorant Babes, but of professing Men and Women," the practice of baptizing infants was not found among them, and that even a proponent of infant Baptism like the Presbyterian Richard Baxter admitted that, "it is not determined in Scripture, but dependeth upon the Tradition of the Church."[63] Finally, with respect to baptism by immersion, Danvers cited the example of the seventh century Council of Toletanus, saying, "*That by being dipt into Water, we do, as it were, descent into Hell; and by rising up out of the Water, we do witness a Resurrection*."[64]

Danvers's 1674 publication was met in turn by a number of publications defending the practice of infant baptism, including *Infant Baptism Asserted*, by Obadiah Wills, *An Essay Tending to Issue the Controversie*, by Richard Blinman, and *Infant Baptism from Heaven*, by Joseph Whiston. In response to Danvers' detractors, a group of six London Baptists (Hanserd Knollys, William Kiffin, Daniel Dyke, Joseph Gosnold, Henry Forty and Thomad Delaune) put their names to *The Baptists Answer to Mr. Obed. Wills, his Appeal against Mr. H. Danvers*, in August 1675. This publication listed various errors that Wills claimed Danvers to have made with respect to the authors he cited, and concludes that in all particulars "we acquit [Danvers], & reflect the blame of the Charge

[62] Henry Danvers, *A Treatise of Baptism: Wherein, That of Believers, and that of Infants, is examined by the Scriptures* (London: Francis Smith, 1674), 2, 32.
[63] Danvers, *Treatise*, 29, 135.
[64] Danvers, *Treatise*, 68.

upon your self."[65] John Tombes also responded to Wills with *Just Reproof of Clamorous Cavils*, as well as *A Just Reply to the Books of Mr. Wills and Mr. Blinman*. Not to be left out, Richard Baxter produced no less than three works in favour of infant baptism from 1675 to 1676.[66] According to Thomas Crosby, Baxter's entry into the debate brought Keach into the fray, and he produced *Mr. Baxters Arguments for believers baptism*, which used Baxter's own arguments in favour of adult confirmation against him, stating that they as much as confirmed the Baptist position on Believer's Baptism. While Crosby admitted that John Tombes had used a simlar tactic, "*Keach's* being much shorter and cheaper, and put into the hands of the *hawkers*, was presently spread all over the town."[67] Baxter himself acknowledges Keach's work, complaining in the postscript of his *More Proofs of Infants Church Membership* that "As I am writing this, the Hawkers are crying under my window, *Mr. Baxters Arguments for Believers*, &c." He admits some exasperation at the fact that "men that cite authors at this rate, cite me against my self, with the like confidence." Nonetheless, he concludes dismissively, "let him be ignorant; for I have not time to satisfie him."[68]

Unfortunately, Keach's attack on Baxter is no longer extant. Instead, we must rely upon his other writings about Baptism, the most extensive example of which is *Light Broke Forth in Wales, Expelling Darkness; or, The Englishman's love to the Antient Britains* (1696), which utilized similar arguments to Danvers's book. This book

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[65] Hanserd Knollys, *The Baptists Answer to Mr. Obed. Wills, his Appeal against Mr. H. Danvers* (London: 1675), 13.
[66] For the debate over Danvers's *Treatise*, see Richard Greaves, *Saints and Rebels: Seven Nonconformists in Stuart England* (Mercer University Press, 1985), 170-172. Greaves comments, accurately, that, "Much of the debate was very tedious and repetitious" (171). Knollys's involvement in the debate mentioned in Barry H. Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions: The Question of Orthodoxy Regarding the Theology of Hanserd Knollys* (Leiden-Boston-Koln: Brill, 2001), 73.
[67] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 4, 276-79.
[68] Richard Baxter, *More proofs of infants church-membership and consequently their right to baptism, or, A second defence of our infant rights and mercies* (London: 1675), 414.

was a response to a Welsh publication in favour of infant baptism by James Owen, and was written in order to respond to his arguments in favour of infant baptism, and to establish that Baptism was to be undergone believers (thus not infants) by "Dipping the whole body in water."[69] Addressing his book to "Godly Christians who are Paedobaptists" and calling his Welsh audience "Worthy Brethren, and Antient Britains," Keach refuted Owen with three basic arguments.[70] Firstly, he advocated for Baptism by immersion on the basis of its symbolism; secondly, he took issue with Owen's belief that Baptism was a covenant, rather than a sign; thirdly, he attacked the infant Baptism as being popish.

Perhaps the most straightforward of Keach's arguments was his explanation that immersion in water was necessary for the ordinance of Baptism. Immersion, he explained, was necessary because Baptism was meant to represent that "our blessed Lord was dead, buried, and rose again." To this end, in order to be properly carried out:

> since a little Water cannot in this Ordinance represent Christ's Burial and Resurrection, it follows directly that a little Water will not serve to baptize Persons in, but that it must be administered in Rivers, Ponds, or places where ther is much water, *i.e.* so much Water as that the Body may be buried or covered all over therein[71]

In addition to this symbolic description of Baptism, Keach, like Danvers before him, cited a number of commentators and translators, including Hugo Grotius and Saint Ambrose, to explain that the Greek itself from the New Testament, "baptizo," properly signified "to dip, plunge, overwhelm, put over, cover over, to dye in Colour, which is

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[69] Benjamin Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales, Expelling Darkness; or, The Englishman's love to the Antient Britains* (London: William Marshall, 1696). Keach's book was also published in Welsh in the same year, as *Goleuni gwedi torri allan Ynghymry, gan ymlid ymmaith dywyllwch*. Owen's book, *Bedydd plant or nefoedd*, or "Children's Baptism From Heaven" seems only to have been published in Welsh. According to Keach, unnamed translators provided him with an English translation of Owen's book, and translated his own into Welsh for him (page xxi).
[70] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, iii.
[71] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 11.

done by plunging."[72] From thence, Keach went on to use biblical examples to argue that baptism by immersion was the practice John the Baptist, Christ, and his Apostles. In particular he brought attention to the rivers and the bodies of water referenced in scripture, reminding the reader that John the Baptist and the Apostles performed Baptism in "*Jordan*, and in *Euon* [sic]." Keach thought it was particularly telling that John performed baptism in the latter river "because there was much water there," (John 3:23). Presumably one does not need "much water," but only a little, in order to sprinkle water on converts.[73]

Moving on from the manner in which Baptism was carried out, Keach also complained that the practice of baptizing infants effectively brought children under a covenant of which they had no knowledge. While Keach and the Baptists saw Baptism as being a symbol of regeneration, that could not be the case with infant baptism unless all children of Christian parents were saved. He asked rhetorically if Own thought, "that all the Children of the Faithful, as such, are the Seed or Children of the *Second-Adam*?"[74] Keach found the suggestion ridiculous, stating that his own faith, or lack there of, could grant neither a better nor a worse condition upon his children, on account of the simple fact that children are not "part of their Parents," but rather "distinct Persons."[75] Because infants are not capable of regeneration, and because it is impossible to determine what infant is or is not among the elect, infant Baptism could not be an ordinance that symbolized a confirmation of regeneration. Instead, Keach believed it was an Arminian error of salvation by works. The details of infant baptism, he wrote, "plainly declare that

[72] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 12.
[73] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 17-20, 22.
[74] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, v.
[75] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, xiii, v, 123.

the terms and condition of the Covenant of Grace…is to perform this Infant Baptism-Covenant…not Faith only whereby we receive Christ, rely on Christ, but the whole of that Obedience to which they were obliged by their Infant-Baptism."[76]

This erroneous conception of Baptism then, committed the baptized to a covenant of works, which flew in the face of the principle of salvation coming from Christ alone. If this were not enough, Keach added, "they bring their poor Babes (without any Authority from Christ) under a Covenant, and charge them with Perjury if they break it, when grown up."[77] In contrast to Paedobaptism, which placed children under a covenant of which they have no knowledge, Believer's Baptism, "is a sign of that Faith and Death unto Sin we had when we were baptized, or to shew that we were then dead to Sin" On this point, Keach cited the Apostle Paul that "we were buried with Him through baptism into death," and specified that Baptism did not oblige believers to be regenerated (which would be to place a covenant of works upon them), but to mark them, "as Persons who are regenerated **before** buried in Baptism."[78] Baptism was an ordinance that marked an inner transformation. Because it was a symbolic recognition of an internal condition, "Ordinances have no more Virtue in them to an Infant, than if you should water a dead Tree."[79]

The implicit errors of infant Baptism, according to Keach, were also rooted in a sense of "Legal and External Privileges," that had been inherited from Judaism and which could lead to the errors of Popery. Paedobaptism was based on a principle of inheritance, Keach suggested, which mimicked the circumcision of Jews under Abraham's covenant

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[76] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, xviii.
[77] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, xviii.
[78] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, xix. Romans 6:4, KJV.
[79] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 6.

with God. While certainly the Jewish laws had been valid in the days before Christ, they were no longer valid. As Keach wrote, "They had the *Shadow*, we and our Children that believe have the *Substance*; they had the *Shell*, we the *Kernel*." The genuine inheritance of Grace, he concluded, was "not in Circumcision, nor in Baptism, but by Faith only."[80] Keach clearly separated the "Covenant of Circumcision" God made with Abraham and his natural descendants, which included compulsory circumcision akin to compulsory Baptism, from the spiritual "Covenant of Grace," which applied to the "spiritual seed" of Abraham upon which Believer's Baptism was based.[81] Put more simply, the "Covenant of Circumcsion was a branch of the old Covenant, or Covenant of Works; *Ergo*, The Covenant of Circumcision was not a Covenant of Grace, or Gospel-Covenant."[82]

Keach went on to explicitly connect infant Baptism to popery. He maintained that Paedobaptism was an echo of circumcision, and that basing Christian ordinances on Old Testament precedents (which in his estimation was precisely what Paedobaptists were doing), "will countenance the Arguments of the Papists for a universal Bishop, because the Jews had such…and for holy Water, Purification of Women, Easter, Pentecost, *&c*. for which the Papists do in like manner argue."[83] That Keach was willing to say that such a common practice amongst Protestants was a slippery slope to popery gives some indication of the importance that he placed upon the issue.

As is clear from the Baptists' lengthy defences of Believer's Baptism against their fellow nonconformists, their unrepentant dissent from the Church of England in respect to ordinances such as Baptism was never in doubt. Even if Keach had been able to clear

[80] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, viii.
[81] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 47, 49.
[82] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 54.
[83] Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 94. See also 113.

himself of accusations that he was a Fifth Monarchy Man, in Justice Hyde's words, it was indisputable that what he wrote about Baptism was contrary to the Act of Uniformity. Rebels or not, Baptists could scarcely deny that their churches were unlawful, nor that their beliefs undermined the assumptions of a confessional system with a uniform, established church. Indeed, their confessions of faith readily acknowledged that they expected to sometimes be treated harshly under the law. The 1644 London Confession acknowledged the authority of the magistrate, and gave a statement of obedience that claims that "although we should suffer never so much from them in not actively submitting to some Ecclesiasticall Lawes…yet are we bound to yeeld our persons to their pleasures." Another article of the confession specified that even if the Magistrate persecutes them "we must notwithstanding proceed together in Christian communion, not daring to give place to suspend our practice, but to walk in obedience to Christ."[84]

Similar sentiments appeared in the Second London Confession of 1677, which, according to William Lumpkin, was organized through a circular letter including Keach, William Kiffin, and Hanserd Knolly, along with John Harris, George Barrett, Edward Man, and Richard Adams.[85] This confession made a clear statement of liberty of conscience:

> God alone is Lord of the Conscience, and hath left it free from the Doctrines and Commandments of men which are in any thing contrary to his Word, or not contained in it. So that to Believe such Doctrines or obey such Commands out of Conscience, is to betray true liberty of Conscience; and the requiring of an implicit Faith, and absolute and blind Obedience, is to destroy Liberty of Conscience, and Reason also.[86]

Belief in their own religious freedom was embedded in Baptist confessions of faith. While these documents stated their willingness to suffer under the civil magistrate, they

[84] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*, 169, 170.
[85] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*, 238.
[86] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*, 280.

also characterized such compulsion in matters of faith as being invalid. This perspective, of suffering willingly under persecution, but advocating for toleration, is also found in the story of Keach's trial.

Freedom of Conscience: Baptist responses

Keach refused to play the role that Justice Hyde had set for him: rather than being cowed and repentant for his crimes, he was defiant in the face of what he perceived as persecution and intolerance. Rather than being the site of his own humiliation, the pillory allowed Keach to preach and defend himself. He declared, "The Apostle saith *That thro' many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven;* and Christ saith, *He that is ashamed of me and my words, in an adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the son of man be ashamed, before the father, and before his holy angels*." While briefly quieted by the jailor, Keach, according to Crosby, "pull'd his *Bible* out of his pocket, and held it up to the people," claiming he could sustain all he wrote, "and for which I stand here this day, a spectacle to men and angels" with scripture, "if I had an opportunity."[87] After preaching with his Bible, Keach went on to say that he had written his book out of concern for human souls, "for which I could suffer far greater things than these." He further advised the crowd that, if they do not heed his preaching, "it will be very sad with you, at the revelation of the Lord *Jesus* from heaven, for we must all appear before his tribunal."[88] While Keach was put on trial and found guilty, his punishment became a platform from which he warned those present of the all-important judgement that awaited them all. He said that through faith in Christ, believers are "willing to go through any

[87] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 205-206. It is perhaps worth noting that, in Stinton's manuscript account of the pillory preaching, there is some confusion as to whether or not Keach had produced the bible from his pocket while pilloried, or if his wife had handed it to him. (Stinton, "A Repository," 103).

[88] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 207.

sufferings for his sake" and concluded that God had made the yoke of his punishment light.[89] The account in the Stinton Repository, intended to emphasize the weight of that yoke, specified that Keach "stood full two hours to a mome[nt] & had his hands as well as head carefully kept in the Pillory the whole time, which was a more strict execution [than] usual in those Parts."[90]

This performance was Keach's response to the narrative of the trial as Hyde would have it. Rather than allowing for the trial to be limited to the fact that he had written and had published a book, he intended for the content of his beliefs to be taken notice of. In this sense, Keach's trial in Buckinghamshire is only one example of a style of performance that was reproduced in a number of contemporary nonconformist works, and modelled to some extent on earlier examples. Some of these works appeared in a polemical or apologetic style, and a few joined that of Keach among the *State Tryals* in 1719. These trials include those of the Quakers William Penn and William Mead for tumult, and the treason trial of the apparent Fifth Monarchist John James.[91] It is in this context that the trial in Buckinghamshire has something to say about the manner in which the prosecution or persecution of dissent was performed during and after the Restoration. In fact, while the stated intentions of the first edition of the *State Tryals*, were to provide examples for the legal instruction of its readers and to provide a history of England through "the greatest Collection of fine Speeches and Arguments, on the most important Subjects," the trials themselves were sometimes less instructive than they were

[89] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 207.
[90] Stinton, "A Repository," 104. Of course, if Keach was preaching with his bible while in the pillory, as the source seems to indicate, it seems like it would be rather difficult for him to have taken the bible from his own pocket with his hands bound.
[91] The trial of John James appears in *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 947-52, while that of Penn and Mead appears in Vol. II, 24-61.

polemical.[92] Indeed, several were written and published with pointedly polemical purposes. The work itself may have been produced in an editorial style devoid of explicit opinion or explanation, but the partisan narratives remained intact from the original sources, and a few of those were clearly written for the purpose of vindicating the accused for their religious dissent.

It would be going too far to claim that Keach's appearance in the *State Tryals* saw him embedded in a legal history of religious toleration, but his trial does share space with accounts written with an agenda. With a small debt to John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, the *State Tryals* began with the altogether martyrological heresy trials of two apparent Lollards. The first was the 1407 trial of William Thorpe, which, far from being a dry matter of fact recounting of events was recorded entirely from the accused's perspective. Thorpe cited John Wycliffe's writings and "dare not for the drede of God submit" in matters of tithes, oath swearing, and the bishops' authority.[93] Following Thorpe's trial was that of John Oldcastle in 1413, which was reprinted from an account written by John Bale, contemporary and collaborator of John Foxe. Bale's version of the Oldcastle trial very much followed the historical narrative of *Actes and Monuments* and opens with a description that Oldcastle was on trial for breaking the "devilish" laws of the Church, and "beholding the unpacable [sic] Fury of Antichrist thus kindeled against him" for his opinions against bishops and clergy.[94] The opening of this collection thus serves to reproduce, entirely intact, the polemical style of the Foxeian martyrological tradition.

While these two trials are the only trials for heresy as such, the *State Tryals* also included several seventeenth-century trials in which religious belief and its punishment

[92] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, iv.
[93] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 5.
[94] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 23.

were on centre stage. These trials included such prominent cases as those of William Prynne, Archbishop Laud, and John Lilburne, as well as a number of less prominent individuals, like Keach. Amongst the more obscure trials is that of John Pordage. This trial before Cromwell's ejectors in 1654 was clearly written after the fact as an attempt at self-justification by the accused. It includes not only the events of the trial but a fair amount of commentary of his own, in order to provide answers to the articles against him, including, in Pordage's words "the Evidence which they through prejudice rejected."[95] As such, the *State Tryals* account in this case included evidence that was explicitly not part of the actual trial. The original printed version of this trial is easily identifiable as 1655's *Innocencie appearing, through the dark mists of pretended guilt*, in which Pordage had included additional commentary on the sentence and an appendix. His was a passionate defence of his own orthodoxy, and a condemnation of "my enemies," who "have neither observed the Law of Nature, the Law of this Nation, nor the Royal Law."[96] All in all, some of these *State Tryals* were less an accounting of the actual events of a trial, and more of a platform for further debate on the trial's merits and the accused's character.

In Charles II's reign such polemically motivated trials include those of John James in 1662, and that of the Quakers William Penn and William Mead in 1670. These trials, like that of Keach, were drawn from the prosecution of dissent in the Restoration's first decade and were each, like Keach's, immediately concerned with the religion and preaching of the accused. The original publications are extant, and while the text of the trials themselves remains unchanged in the *State Tryals*, they also included significant

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[95] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 777.
[96] John Pordage, *Innocencie appearing, through the dark mists of pretended guilt. Or, A full and true narration of the unjust and illegal proceedings of the commissioners of Berks, (for ejecting scandalous and insufficient ministers) against John Pordage of Bradfield* (London: Printed Giles Calvert, 1655), 105.

additional commentary, redacted from the 1719 publication. These three cases are examples of a genre of nonconformist accounts of persecution, which doubled as polemic, defending themselves and appealing for freedom of religion. They portray the accused in a martyrological light by depicting the arbitrary nature of their punishment for their beliefs.

The trials are akin to a variety of publications by contemporaries like John Bunyan, Keach's associates William Kiffin and Hanserd Knollys, and the Quaker George Fox, all of whom provided varying sorts of firsthand accounts of their own abuse and persecution.[97] All of these writings, whether specific accounts of arrest and abuse or larger autobiographical works describing the various occasions on which the writer fell afoul of the authorities, were designed to give a justification of the writers' own beliefs, and appeal for their toleration. Works of this sort were, in short, a dry run for the kind of heroic confessional history and martyrology that co-religionists like Thomas Crosby would later compile. It is as part of this confessional genre, and as part of the performance of persecution, that these Dissenters' trials enter the *State Tryals*.

In presenting a persecution narrative, these trials included a number of characterizations and personal reflections that a simple transcript would lack. In the case of Keach's trial in the Stinton Repository, this takes the form of several characterizations

[97] The writings in question include to following: William Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin: Written by himself and edited from the Original Manuscript*, Ed. William Orme (London: Burton and Smith, 1823); Hanserd Knollys and William Kiffin, *The Life and Death of That Old Disciple of Jesus Christ, and Eminent Minister of the Gospel, Mr. Hanserd Knollys, Who Dyed In the Ninety Third Year of his Age* (London: Printed for John Harris, 1692); John Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan, Minister of the Gospel at Bedford, In November, 1660* (London: Printed for James Buckland, 1765); Bunyan, *A True and Impartial Narrative of Some Illegal and Arbitrary proceedings by certain Justices of the Peace and others, against several innocent and peaceable Nonconformists in and near the Town of Bedford, upon pretence of putting in execution the late Act against Conventicles* (1670); George Fox, *A journal or historical account of the life, travels, sufferings, Christian experiences and labour of love in the work of the ministry, of… George Fox*, (London: 1694).

not included in the *State Tryals*, which give the reader a sense of the accused man's state of mind and the context surrounding the trial. When the judge acts to silence Keach, the account records that "This Threatining made Mr. K. & some of his Friends…fear that he intended to have him hanged."[98] When Keach is refused a copy of the indictment he was "deny'd his right as an Englishman," and when Hyde sums up the evidence to the jury he "he cast many Reflections on ye Prisoner to incense them" and so on.[99] The account provides additional authorial explanation of events which all cast the trial in the light of an arbitrary persecution. Also working to give the image of arbitrary punishment, the trial of William Penn and William Mead for a tumult (allegedly caused by their preaching), included a characterization of the manner in which not only the accused but the jurors were interfered with: the judge is said to target one juror in particular due to his religion "apprehending him to be a Person not fit to answer their Arbitrary Ends," and likewise, "The Bench used many unworthy Threats" toward jurors dissenting from a guilty verdict.[100]More than the judge's actions, his sinister motives are stated as well.

In addition to giving an account of the trials' proceedings, these original printed sources included extra materials that provided additional context and interpretation. This was the case for the trial of John James, executed for treason in 1662 as a Fifth Monarchist preacher. Like the Stinton account of Keach's conduct on the pillory, the printed trial of James includes his conduct while imprisoned and a lengthy final speech before his death, wherein he gives an extended justification of his faith: also appended is an account of the mysteriously providential deaths of several individuals involved in

[98] Stinton, "A Repository," 100.
[99] Stinton, "A Repository," 97, 100.
[100] *State Tryals*, Vol. 2, 57, 59.

James's trial.[101] The print gives the executed man the opportunity to have the last word and to see his persecutors condemned. Penn's and Mead's record of their own trial includes a preface denouncing the court for its arbitrary actions and expressing disgust that "Liberty of Conscience, *is counted a Pretence for Rebellion*, *and* Religious Assemblies, Routs, *and* Riots; *and the* Defenders *of both, are by them, reputed* Factious and dis-affected."[102] This largely replicates the performance of Penn at court, where he complains that "Certainly our Liberties are openly to be invaded, our Wives ravished, our Children slaved, our Families ruined, and our Estates led away in Triumph, by every sturdy Beggar and malicious Informer."[103] In all its hyperbolic glory, Penn's speech in his own defence is emblematic of a tendency in these trials to present the proceedings in the most arbitrary possible light.

With authors willing to depict the court as overbearing persecutors, the role of martyr was that much easier to perform, but it was also important to reflect that the cause of the accused's suffering was faith. Nonconformists in these trials made all due efforts to speak about their faith in defending their beliefs and portraying those beliefs as the sole reason for their prosecution. Keach thus responded to the charges against him by attempting to defend the contents of his own printed confession of faith. He asserted that it is no innovation and that "Thousands of Christians have made a Confession of their Faith," though his efforts at speaking to the specifics of Baptism and ministers of the

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[101] Anon, *A Narrative of the apprehending, commitment, arraignment, condemnation, and execution of John James, who suffered at Tiburne, Novemb. the 26th, 1661 with several occasional passages and speeches, faithfully collected from such as were eye and ear witnesses : also, an account of the death of several persons since the execution of John James, known to be active and diligent in that matter* (London: 1662), 38-47.

[102] William Penn, *The peoples ancient and just liberties asserted in the tryal of William Penn, and William Mead, at the sessions held at the Old-Baily in London, the first, third, fourth and fifth of Sept. 70. against the most arbitrary procedure of that court.* (London: 1670), 3.

[103] *State Tryals*, Vol. 2, 58.

Gospel were frustrated.[104] In making a defence of his beliefs, Keach aimed to make the trial about what he believed rather than only what he had done. In the event, however, he was given no chance to make his faith an aspect of his defence, or to speak substantially to it save for saying, "I hope I shall never renounce those truths, which I have written in that Book."[105] Of course, the version from Stinton's "Repository" provides the episode of the pilloried preacher, in which Keach is seen defending his beliefs just as he was unable to do in court. This is a compelling performance, as we have seen, but it is one that Justice Hyde prevented at the trial itself.

In another case, not included in the *State Tryals* but published posthumously, John Bunyan was more successful in drawing his judge into a religious debate, though he was imprisoned nonetheless. In *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan, Minister of the Gospel at Bedford, In November, 1660*, published in 1765, Bunyan's own account of his trial, on account of his illegal preaching, gave ample opportunity for contesting the court's conduct. As opposed to Keach's trial, in which Hyde quickly silenced the accused's efforts to talk about his beliefs, Bunyan's trial included lengthy digressions about scripture and preaching. One concerned party, Dr. Lindale, asked Bunyan how he could prove his preaching lawful, to which Bunyan responded by quoting 1 Peter 4:10 that "*As every man hath received the gift, even so let him minister the same*," and adding that "*You may all prophesy one by one*."[106] Thus the trial's principal concern, whether or not Bunyan had broken English law, was diverted into a discussion of his right to preach

[104] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1017.
[105] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1020
[106] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 9. The second verse on Prophesying seems to be quoted from 1 Corinthians 14:31.

according to scripture itself. This diversion of course served Bunyan's purpose in presenting himself as one of the suffering saints.

The trial also saw attempts to characterize Bunyan by his low social status, with a constable asking why he preached rather than contenting himself with his calling (effectively suggesting that he should know his place). Bunyan's response was "that I could do both these without confusion, (to wit) follow my calling, and preach the word also."[107] The judge in charge of the trial, Justice Keelin, likewise made the error of debating with Bunyan. He responded to Bunyan's quotation of 1 Peter, saying that "as every man hath received a trade, so let him follow it," namely that Bunyan being a tinker should keep to his calling. Bunyan denied that the scripture in this particular passage has anything to do with "civil callings" rather than "the exercising of those gifts that we have received from God."[108]

Justice Keelin even allowed the trial to include a debate about the Book of Common Prayer. While Bunyan refused to take part in written prayers as a whole, Keelin said that "it is lawful to use Common Prayer, and such like forms: Christ taught his disciples to pray, as John also taught his disciples," and that men can teach eachother because "Faith comes by hearing: And one man may convince another of sin, and therefore prayers made by men, and read over, are good to teach, and help men to pray." To this attempt at persuasion, Bunyan responds that "the spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with sighs and groanings which cannot be uttered…it doth not say the Common Prayer-book teacheth us how to pray, but the spirit."[109] While neither man convinced the

[107] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 7
[108] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 26-27
[109] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 21-22.

other, and Bunyan was convicted, he was able to do what Keach could not, and testify to his faith in court, as well as through his later account of the trial.

Like Bunyan, Penn and Mead had more success in casting their case as one of religious persecution (which may be part of the reason that they were acquitted). While the charge against them was that they had caused a tumult, Penn took it as an affront to his religious conscience: he was "so far from recanting, or declining to vindicate the Assembling of our selves to Preach, Pray, or Worship the Eternal, Holy, Just God, that we declare to all the World, that we do believe it to be our indispensable Duty…nor shall all the Powers upon Earth be able to divert us from reverencing and adoring our God." Penn effectively claimed that his public behaviour was inseparable from his conscience because it was imperative on account of his faith. Forceful though Penn's speech was, the only response with which he was met was that "You are not here for worshipping God, but for breaking the Law."[110] John James, on trial for his preaching, also sought to explain it in terms of his faith, but was cut off by the judge, who interrupted him saying, "*Hold…you think you are in the Conventicle in* White-Chappel*, Preaching.*"[111] While he was not suffered to defend his beliefs as such, the perception of religious persecution was apparently sufficient that another member of the court attempted to clarify "that the Prisoner at the Bar is not arraigned for his Conscience or Religion, but for Treason and Rebellion."[112] This response put an end to the proper performance of martyrdom within the court. Not only were English courts familiar with that particular narrative, they were especially sensitive to it and aimed to debunk it in performing their own narrative of these trials.

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[110] *State Tryals*, Vol. 2, 58.
[111] *State Trials*, Vol. 1, 950.
[112] *State Trials*, Vol. 1, 951.

Conclusion

Benjamin Keach's writing career certainly had less than promising beginnings, commencing as it did with a trial, conviction, and punishment. Nonetheless, his trial effectively sets the stage, giving a clear indication of the state of affairs for Baptists in the 1660s. First, his treatment at trial and the manner in which Hyde characterized him and his religious beliefs provides a specific case of the more general opprobrium and hostility with which his coreligionists were met on account of their unfortunate associations with the more radical aspects of the Civil Wars, and, more recently, the millenarian revolt of the Fifth Monarchists. Secondly, The content of the charges against Keach especially with respect to the beliefs for which he was placed on trial, help to situate him as a Baptist among the varieties of nonconformity in the Restoration. Far from fitting into a general category of "Nonconformist," the eschatological framework within which Keach wrote from time to time placed him somewhere on the spectrum of being a millenarian threat, a point which Hyde made all to clear. The Baptists had more of an enduring problem, however, when it came to the issue of ordinances like Baptism itself: here their disagreements with not only the Church of England but with many if not most of their fellow nonconformists placed them on the defensive. Even amongst Baptists, disputes could occur over the ordinance, and John Bunyan for one had a dispute with London Baptists including William Kiffin over whether it was acceptable to allow non-baptized believers to be in communion with his church.[113] Disputes over ordinances, as we shall see in chapter 4, would dog Keach into the 1690s.

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[113] John Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 292-296.

Finally, Keach's response to his prosecution, namely his conduct at trial and, according to Stinton, his public defiance of his punishment, places him among the ranks of nonconformists who sought to use their punishment as a platform against the intolerance of the Restoration Settlement. All told, then, the trial of Benjamin Keach exhibits three of the major themes in Baptist experiences, and in Keach's own career, which subsequent chapters will be examining. Baptists, Keach included, would constantly need to make the case for their own toleration in the face of persecution. Saddled with considerable baggage from the Civil Wars and their perceived origins, as Keach had been at trial, Baptists would need to defend themselves from negative depictions and distance themselves from their more damning associations. They would also need to clarify their beliefs through confessions of faith, debate, and publications, both to a hostile audience amongst other Protestants, and within their own congregations as well. By the 1670s, the work of the Baptists in clarifying their beliefs, and defending them against a hostile audience, would be put to the test in a dispute against another group of nonconformists. The group in question, the Quakers, also happened to embody much from which Baptists in general, and Keach in particular, wanted to distance themselves. This confrontation is the subject of Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: *The Grand Imposter*. Baptist-Quaker Polemics of the 1670s

It was with good reason that Benjamin Keach's sometime-printer John Dunton referred to him as "This warlike Author" in his 1705 autobiography.[1] Of Keach's forty-six recorded works, twenty-four may be clearly classified as polemic.[2] Whether defending the particularities of his church's ecclesiology, warning about the evils of Roman Catholicism and the imminent threat of popery, or attacking the errors of other Protestants, Keach was a constant antagonist. His targets included not only the Pope, whom he considered to be the Antichrist, the excesses of formality within the established church, or the intolerance with which he and his fellow Baptists were often faced, but fellow nonconformists as well. This chapter deals with the significance of the last of these species of debate, that between Baptists and members of other nonconforming groups. Polemic exchanged between different groups of nonconformists is essential to the understanding of a specific confessional identity, Baptist, within the larger category of nonconformity. Of course, it is true that various nonconformists often took pen in hand to defend themselves against conformity, but the works of Keach and his contemporaries give adequate proof that the Baptists, as a confessional group, were concerned with differentiating themselves from and attacking the errors of some other nonconforming groups. The group against which Baptists were most keen to launch their polemic were

[1] John Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London; With the Lives and Characters of more than a Thousand Contemporary Divines* (London: J. Nichols, Son, and Bentley, 1818), 177.
[2] I count Keach's four apocalyptic works as being polemical inasmuch as they are designed to attack Roman Catholicism and, in the case of three of the four, take a Whig position against James II. One of Keach's polemical works is no longer extant: *Mr. Baxters Arguments for believers baptism* from 1674, although it is recorded by Thomas Crosby and is given a brief mention by Richard Baxter in one of his publications. In addition to Keach's twenty-four polemical works, his books of hymns may also be considered polemics inasmuch as they were published during his dispute over hymn-singing with Isaac Marlow, and contain explicit arguments for the singing of the hymns themselves.

the Quakers, though Keach later expressed antipathy against the old Puritan Richard Baxter.

The focus of this chapter is on the polemical exchanges between Baptists and Quakers. Particular Baptist churches' expression of orthodoxy in both their polemic and their confessions of faith were at stake in this confrontation. In debates with Quakers, the main points of contention for Particular Baptists were the authority of scripture, Calvinist soteriology and Christology. In each of these areas polemicists like Keach attacked the heterodoxy of Quakers to the extent of challenging their Christianity. Thomas Hicks made his position on the Quakers' questionable status clear with the title of his 1672, *A Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker*, provoking a series of debates in the following year. Additionally, in spite of the shared anti-formalism of both groups, Baptists represented the Quakers as undermining scriptural ordinances necessary to the Gospel Church. While this view would not figure prominently in the debates of the 1670s, Keach and his supporters would use the "silent Meetings of the Quakers" almost as a trope in their defences of hymn-singing in the 1690s.[3] The opposition that Keach and his fellows expressed against these fellow nonconformists, publicly and within their congregations, indicates the extent to which difference within nonconformity informed their own identity.

In 1675 Keach published *The Grand Impostor Discovered*, a polemic against Quakers. Less like other theological debates in which he engaged, which typically took

[3] Benjamin Keach, *The Breach Repaired in God's Worship: Or, Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, proved to be an Holy Ordinance of Jesus Christ* (London: Printed for the Author, and sold by John Hancock, and by the Author at his House near Horselydown in Southwark, 1691), 14; Hanserd Knollys, *An Answer to a Brief Discourse Concerning Singing In the publick Worship of God in the Gospel-Church, By J.M. 1690* (London: Printed for the Author, 1691), 4; S.W., J.C., J.L, *Truth Vindicated; Or Mr. Keach's Sober Appeal Answered* (London: 1691), 7.

the form of dense arguments in lengthy books or sermons, than his eschatologically charged *Sion in Distress* or *Distressed Sion Relieved*, this polemic takes the form of a verse dialogue. It presents a debate between a godly "Professor" and an erring Quaker. In the immediate context this work was part of a broader dispute between Baptists and Quakers. In the months before Keach published the dialogue London was the scene of public debates and subsequent printed invectives between the two nonconforming groups. That *The Grand Impostor Discovered* was published immediately after the spate of polemic from both sides following the public disputes is indicative of the direct motivation behind Keach putting pen to paper. Moreover, the form of Keach's verse reflects one of the Quakers' principle complaints in these debates, namely that Thomas Hicks had misrepresented them through a feigned, fictional dialogue that pretended to depict a real Quaker.[4] Such dialogues were, in George Whitehead's words, "Personating the *Quakers* with his own Ridiculous Falshoods and Consequences."[5]

Hicks's works were the focus of this dispute between Baptists and Quakers, which lasted from 1673 to 1675. Keach's contribution of another dialogue, more obviously feigned because in verse, added salt to those wounds, but this contest was not simply an ephemeral affair. Rather, it was a high point in the expression of animosity between two groups that spent decades defining themselves against one another, and the issues of contention in the debates were central to the Baptist understanding of orthodoxy. Hicks criticized Quakers' belief in the light within, saying that it undermined the authority of scripture by locating spiritual authority within man, and in so doing also placed the means

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[4] William Mead, J. Osgood, W. Shewen, E. Man, S. Newton, J.Claypool, W. Welch, *A Brief Account of the Most Material Passages Between those called Quakers And Baptists At the Barbican-Meeting, London, the 9th of the 8th Moneth, 1674* (London: 1674), 15.

[5]George Whitehead, *The Dipper Plung'd, Or, Thomas Hicks his Feigned Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker; Proved, an Unchristian Forgery* (London: 1672), 3.

of salvation in man rather than God.[6] In effect, Hicks would say that the latter position denies Christ as a mediator, making the Quakers "a people under the Immediate Judgement of God." To further show their faulty Christology he quoted from Whitehead to show him denying the description of "*Jesus Christ a Person without us*," which represented a denial of Christ's humanity.[7] Furthermore, Hicks asked of Quaker anti-formalism and hostility to ordinances, "Was not Satan the first that ever rais'd dispute against an Institution?"[8] Hicks struck at these points to deny Quakers' Christianity, and the debates and polemic, which followed his publication would respond to precisely these issues, as would Keach's later contribution. The Baptists' public dispute between the Baptists and the Quakers, then, gave expression to their sense of being firmly within the Protestant orthodoxy, with their opponents being the representatives of antichristian heterodoxy. As theological controversies go, these are high stakes, and they have their roots in the longstanding animosity between the groups in spite of, and in part due to, their similar places in nonconformity.

Baptists against the Quakers before 1670

Between the Interregnum of the 1650s and the Glorious Revolution Baptists and Quakers engaged in virulent polemic against one another, which is the focus of T.L. Underwood's

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[6] Thomas Hicks, *A Dialogue Between a Christian and a Quaker* (London: Henry Hills and Peter Parker, 1673), 22-40.

[7] Thomas Hicks, *A Continuation of the Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker: Wherein The truth of those things objected against them in the first part, are fully confirm'd: Together With a further account of their perilous and pernicitious Errors* (London: printed for Peter Parker, 1673), Epistle to the Reader, 41. The quotation that Hicks uses in this passage is accurate: Whitehead had quoted Hicks, "*Jesus Christ, God, Man, a Person without thee*" and responded to this description with "This is not Scripture Language; but the *Anthropomorphites* and *Muggletonians*, who profess a Personal God, denying him to be an Infinite Spirit." Hicks includes only the first half of this quotation, though, and does not include the distinction Whitehead makes between "a Personal God" and "an Infinite Spirit" (Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 13).

[8] Hicks, *A Dialogue*, 81.

book, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War*. The sheer amount of controversy between Quakers and Baptists is reflected in Joseph Smith's *Bibliotheca Anti-Quakeriana* (1873), which sees Baptists representing twenty percent of writers and works directed against Quakers until 1689. Likewise, some nineteen percent of the 109 sections in George Fox's *The Great Mistery* (1659) were directed against Baptists.[9] The prominence of Baptists in both of these sources is all the more significant considering that they were, like the Quakers themselves, a small group consisting of barely over one percent of the population in England and Wales.[10] Clearly the differences between these two groups were of real significance to them, and, as a constant mouthpiece of the London Particular Baptists, Benjamin Keach would enter that fray in 1675. Before discussing his contributions, however, some context is necessary.

Ever since the Quakers emerged onto the British religious landscape in the turbulent decade of the 1650s, preachers and religious writers on each side engaged in confrontations and debates, competing for brethren among those seeking truth in the aftermath of the Civil War. As early as 1653 the unpublished Quaker manuscript "Truth Cleared from Errors" records hostile encounters between the itinerant Richard Farnworth and Baptists at various places. The manuscript depicts Baptist Joseph Wright as expressing "wisdom of the flesh…to shew forth the pride of his owne heart" against Farnworth.[11] Wright accused Quakers of "creeping into houses to lead away people" this

[9] T.L. Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War: The Baptist-Quaker Conflict in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 17.
[10] Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 270. This percentage is based on numbers from c.1700, and the number of Baptists is here reckoned based on the combined numbers of both Particular and General Baptists. The Particular Baptists alone amounted to 0.77% of the population of England and Wales.
[11] Anon., "Truth Cleared from Scandalls," Add 39865 (c. 1653), British Library, 5.

is called a "priests saying, who speakes to scandalize the truth."[12] Similarly, Farnworth complained of the role of the Baptists in propagating the hurtful name of "Quaker," which "Baptists, Independents, Presbiterians, Priests" used to abuse his coreligionists.[13] Seeing Baptists and priests as identical in their persecution, Farnworth similarly asked in reference to the breaking of bread "what difference is there in that between you and the priest?" He called it an ordinance of the will of man, said that baptism is "of the flesh," and referred to Baptist worship as, "[gathering] the carnall mindes together, to sett upp a man to speake the carnall letter?"[14]

The manuscript, then, principally focuses attention on the lack of spirituality among the Baptists and dependence on the flesh in a display of Quaker anti-formalism. From a Quaker's perspective at any rate, their differences with Baptists paralleled perfectly their antipathy to the rest of the Antichristian world. In this respect the account resembles George Fox's later *Journal*, which in recounting the same period of time criticized Baptist formalism "for they looked upon the Scriptures as meaning outward mountains and ways," and said that Baptists and others came to resemble priests when they, "got into steeplehouses and tithes' and then these things were *jure divino* with them."[15] Fox's *Journal* recorded a multitude of encounters akin to Farnworth's. Sometimes his encounters were through formal disputations or happenstance meetings, and at other times, like Farnworth, he would occasion debates by attending Baptist

[12] "Truth Cleared," 12.
[13] "Truth Cleared," 4.
[14] "Truth Cleared," 12, 17, 23.
[15] George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, Ed. John L. Nickalls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 46, 392.

meetings. Fox recorded many successful conversions gained in this manner, which gives some sense of context for Wright's image of Quakers as thieves in the night.[16]

For their part, both General and Particular Baptists published attacks against the Quakers, including such writers and ministers as Matthew Caffyn and William Jeffrey, whose works among others the Baptist printer Francis Smith published early in his career in the late 1650s.[17] Volume of writing was not lacking and it came from the pens and presses of very notable figures within the Baptist churches. With respect to the hurly-burly of the Quakers' first decades during which these conflicts began, Michael Mullet reminds us that John Bunyan was a contemporary of Fox and his career reflected similar opposition between "mechanical" preachers and their tithe-paid, educated counterparts. In spite of this common ground and similar origin, however, Bunyan's 1650s writings included *Some Gospel Truths Opened* (1656), and *A Vindication of Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, defences of scripture aimed at Quakers, along with other defences of orthodox understanding of the historical Christ and the saving grace of his crucifixion.[18] Bunyan's *A Vindication of the Book Called, Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, argued that Quakers' beliefs were essentially those of Ranters.[19]

In one case during the Interregnum a document played the role of both an anti-Quaker polemic and a Baptist confession. William Lumpkin describes in his compendium of confessions of faith that Welsh Baptist John Myles prepared *An Antidote Against the Infection of the Times* in 1656, primarily as a refutation of Quakers who were "playing

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[16] Fox, *Journal*, 25, 46, 146, 159, 164-5, 182-83, 229, 273, 279, 321, 566. Fox recounts many such encounters with Baptists, primarily taking place in the mid-1650s, but occasionally occurring in the early Restoration (though, by this point, the focus of the *Journal*'s narrative has shifted somewhat).
[17] Timothy Crist, "Francis Smith and the Opposition Press in England, 1660-1688" (PhD diss., Cambridge, 1977), 4-7.
[18] Michael Mullett, *John Bunyan in Context* (Keele University Press: Keele Straffordshire, 1996), 50-51, 70.
[19] Mullet, *John Bunyan in Context*, 136.

havoc with many scattered bands of Baptists in South Wales." While this was an attack on the Quakers, Lumpkin also claims that its clear statement of Baptist beliefs served as a rallying point as a confession for Welsh Baptists.[20] Suffice it to say, then, that the differences between the two groups were of long standing before the Restoration. They emerged from the formative mid-century experiences of both denominations, and produced their share of heated debate before the Restoration. But while the differences between the two groups date from the Interregnum, it is perhaps their shared status as Restoration-era nonconformists, depicted in Chapter 1, which best informs the debates that brought Keach onto this particular stage.

"Anabaptists," Quakers, and Fifth Monarchy Men

The context for dispute and opposition amongst nonconformists such as Baptists and Quakers might be better understood through a desire to distinguish themselves from one another. Conflation of diverse nonconforming groups was a common tool of which conforming writers made use. As we have seen in Chapter 1, Crosby's *History of the English Baptists* described the widespread and indiscriminate use of the name "Anabaptist" in attacking opponents of all sorts. He quoted from Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* the words of Henry VIII, "the one calleth the other *Heretick*, and *Anabaptist*, and he calleth him again *Papist*, *Hypocrite*, and *Pharisee*," and noted that thereafter the

[20] William Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Chicago-Philadelphia-Los Angeles: The Judson Press, 1959), 217. Indeed, a side-by-side comparison makes the Baptist confessions' dependence upon the *Westminster Confession* and the *Savoy Declaration* of 1658 all too obvious: see for instance James N. Anderson, "A Tabular Comparison of the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith, the 1658 Savoy Declaration of Faith, the 1677/1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith and the 1742 Philadelpha Confession of Faith," last modified 2007, http://www.proginosko.com/docs/wcf_sdfo_lbcf.html.

name would be used for various dissenters irrespective of difference.[21] Similar conflation for the purpose of slandering dissenters was common. For one example, in spite of John Bunyan's own writings against Quakers, the perceived similarities between the two groups were such that Thomas Smith's attack on Bunyan was entitled *The Quaker Disarmed*, while Henry Denne's response was *The Quaker no Papist*.[22]

In 1660, Richard Blome's *The Fanatick history: or An Exact Relation and Account of The Old Anabaptists, and New Quakers* was an explicit argument for the shared genealogy of the Baptists and Quakers. This anti-Quaker polemic traced the origins of the Quakers to the sedition and fanaticism of the Anabaptists back to the sixteenth century. While the first half of Blome's work was an account of the history of continental Anabaptists, he provided a gloss of marginal notes that make connections between them and seventeenth century dissent. He compared Anabaptist Nicholas Stock to Mahomet and the Quakers (due to "living homely and sordidly") and connected Thomas Müntzer to Papists and Levellers. The Anabaptist Bernhard Knipperdolling (who "stood only upon revelations, and a particular spirit") was called "The foundation of the Quakers."[23] While Blome, then, made particular connection between the erroneous beliefs of Anabaptists and Quakers, the more general association between Anabaptism and wider varieties of heresy, with little regard for demonstrable historical connections, is indicative of the mental image of dissent with which Blome was working.

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[21] Thomas Crosby, *The history of the English Baptists, from the Reformation to the beginning of the reign of King George I*, Vol. 3, (London: 1738), xlix.
[22] Mullett, *John Bunyan*, 50-51.
[23] Richard Blome, *The Fanatick history: or An Exact Relation and Account of The Old Anabaptists, and New Quakers. Being the summe of all that hath been yet discovered about their most Blasphemous Opinions, Dangerous Pactices [sic] and Malitious Endevours to subvert all Civil Government both in Church and State* (London: Printed for J. Sims, 1660), 7, 9, 28, 46.

If, as we have seen, hostile writers made little effort to distinguish between Baptists, Quakers, and actual rebels, so too did the Episcopal returns of 1669. In these records, the identification of diverse congregations is sometimes uncertain, and the grouping together of different nonconformists could only help to confirm the assumptions of Charles II's 1661 Proclamation.[24] If soldiers and constables lumped Baptists and Quakers together as a threat, the returns lumped them together in worship, often specifying that members of a meeting had fought against the King in the "late rebellion" (the Civil War).[25] While it is possible that such dissenters shared spaces and even worshipped together, despite stated differences, the varieties of nomenclature used are telling. The returns for Cambridge list approximately sixty "Fanatiques," an uncertain description at best, while in Nottingham and Durham we find "Anabaptists & fift [sic] monarchy men" and "52 Anabaptists or Freewillers" respectively.[26] Such terms hearken back to Thomas Edwards' heresiography, and Roger L'Estange's suspicions (depicted in *The Committee*, referenced in Chapter 1) would have been confirmed if he read the record that in Mountsorrel, Leicester, the teacher of Anabaptists was "Edward Smith…thought to be a Jesuite."[27]

Baptist Confessions of Faith: Drawing Distinctions

While there was a good deal of hostility between Baptists and Quakers, there was also, admittedly, some genuine points of similarity. George Fox himself observed that, when they first arose, Baptists "cried tithes were antichristian," much as Fox himself did. The

[24] See Chapter 1.
[25] G. Lyon Turner ed. *Original Records of Early Nonconformity*, Vol. 1 (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911-14), 45; 14, 29, 35. Such groupings are listed in Canterbury, Chichester, Ely, and Whittlesea.
[26] Turner, *Original Records*, Vol. 1, 41, 155, 168.
[27] Turner, *Original Records*, Vol. 1, 69.

difference becomes apparent in that Baptists and Presbyterians "began to make laws and orders and said, 'Hitherto shalt thou go'" once they were in a position to do so.[28] In this case, similar origins accentuate the carnality that Fox saw other dissenters developing, and their common ground also played a significant role in their interactions and self-definition. William Lumpkin observes a "most intimate kinship" between the two groups, and suggests that for this very reason the Quakers represented a new danger to Baptists in the 1650s. "While the General Baptists suffered more from the inroads of the Quakers than did their Calvinistic brethren, the latter also were very conscious of the new danger which they faced."[29] Fox's own account of the mid-century confirms this much, with his repeated forays into Baptist meetings in search of new Friends, and in this light we can appreciate Joseph Wright's accusation that Quakers were "creeping into houses to lead away people."[30]

Members of Baptist churches would continue, if infrequently, to be tempted away by Quaker beliefs in the Restoration, if Baptist church books are any indication. William Kiffin's Devonshire Square records two instances of members abandoning the church, and in November of 1667 four members broke with the church together despite an attempt to "Reclaime them from [the] principles of the quakers." The Barbican church book records later concerns over a similar situation as well.[31] Baptist records are spotty (in the case of Devonshire Square, there is a fourteen year break in the record, and only two entries in the 1670s), but there are very few cases recorded in which members

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[28] Fox, *Journal*, 392.
[29] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 150.
[30] "Truth Cleared," 12.
[31] Devonshire Square (Particular) Baptist Church, CLC/179/MS20228/1A, London Metropolitan Archives, 3 November 1667, September 1703; Barbican Church Minute Book, Angus Library, Oxford, October-November.

convert, so these Quaker problems should be weighed accordingly. In 1691 Keach himself would recall the incident of a member of his congregations turning Quaker as well.[32]

Aside from Lumpkin, other scholars have also acknowledged the shared affinity of Baptists and Quakers to which conversions of this sort are owed. Whiting observes that both groups shared "the distrust of human learning…[and the] doctrine of Inner Light affected both."[33] Expanding on the same connection, the central concept of Underwood's study is the concept of Primitivism, an emphasis on and proximity to the New Testament Church, which he sees as connecting Baptists and Quakers to one another and with others of the Puritan tradition, including such as Richard Baxter. They also shared antipathy to such "carnal practices" as sacraments, though while the Baptists rejected sacraments as such they would maintain such practices as baptism and the Lord's Supper as ordinances.[34] Members of both groups would similarly attack bishops, priestly vestments, ornamentation and any practice not supported by scripture, as well as both denouncing playhouses, revelry, and of course their own persecution by the state.

In this respect, one might imagine that there was much a Baptist could find to like in the Quakers. And while the sort of interchangeable dissent sketched out in works like *Gangraena* was far from accurate, Michael Watts gives an account of the fluctuation and denominational itinerancy of mid-century dissent in which no short list of believers "were ultimately repelled by what they came to regard as Baptist reliance on the letter rather

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[32] Benjamin Keach, *An Answer to Mr. Marlow's Appendix* (London: Printed for the Author, 1691), 12. When precisely this occurred is not specified, though as Keach tells the story the man's break with the congregation was occasioned by an initial disagreement over the singing of hymns.
[33] C.E. Whiting, *Studies in English Puritanism from the Restoration to the Revolution, 1660-1688* (New York and Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1931), 88-89.
[34] Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War*, 4, 7. For ordinances see 67-81.

than the Spirit." Thereafter, "It was the glory of the Quaker message to resolve the conflict which racked the souls of John Crook and Stephen Crisp, to close the gap between profession and practice which disturbed the consciences of William Bennitt and Thomas Symonds."[35] The movement of members from Baptist churches to the Quakers exhibits the groups' commonalities, but it also adds another motivation for Baptist attempt to differentiate themselves in their public self-representation.

Beyond the Particular Baptists' explicit disavowal of Fifth Monarchy in different printed works, they also produced confessions of faith that were intended to demonstrate their own sound Protestantism. Those principles that were of central importance to the self-defined sense of orthodoxy among the Baptists—notably Christology, soteriology, and scripture—were precisely the positions on which they attacked the heterodoxy of Quakers in the 1670s. Lumpkin quite rightly observes that their Restoration-era confessions of faith were modelled on a sense of orthodoxy drawn from the Westminster Confession.[36] These confessions display an emphasis upon mainline Calvinist Christology, soteriology, and faith in the scripture as their essential points of agreement with other Protestants. This was at once to make a case for freedom of conscience for themselves, as well, perhaps, as to emphasize their difference from other, unorthodox groups.

Of course, given the lack of central organization and discipline in Baptist churches, confessions of faith did not represent a decisive expression of orthodoxy. But the published confessions were certainly a means through which congregations expressed their understandings of faith in a public fashion. Moreover, the London-area

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[35] Watts, *Dissenters*, 202.
[36] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 236-240.

congregations in particular tended to act as a unit in signing confessions from 1644 onwards. The 1644 confession represented a joint confession of seven London Baptist churches, and carries the names of William Kiffin, John Spilsbery, and Hanserd Knollys, while 1677's London was based on the same core of London Churches. This confession would be adopted as the standard confession by the Particular Baptists' first general assembly in 1689. The London churches and their ministers, including Keach, Kiffin, Knollys, John Harris, William Collins, Hercules Collins, and Richard Adams, once again served as a foundation of signatories to this confession, which was republished in 1699. This "Second London Confession" thus shows cooperation and assent in the process of its creation, even from the outset, by key players.[37] With this is mind we may at least take the confessions of faith to reflect the doctrinal issues with which these interested parties were concerned.

Underwood argues that Baptist confessions of the 1670s were aimed at distancing Baptists from radicalism and Quakers: "[they] reflected the belief that the direct revelation of biblical times had ceased and that now in the Holy Scripture was recorded what was necessary for salvation."[38] Inasmuch as the authority of scripture is emphasized, and there are some hints that the writers of these confessions wished to allude to the erroneous "light within" through which the Quakers sought to mediate the scriptures, he is correct. This is not to say, though, that confessions prior to the 1670s were not interested in the authority of scripture. Indeed the 1644 confession made it clear that the valid source on worship and Christian duties, "is not mans inventions, opinions, devices, lawes, constitutions, or traditions unwritten whatsoever, but onely the word of

[37] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 156, 238-39.
[38] Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War*, 22.

God contained in the Canonicall Scriptures," and specifies that scripture "plainly revealed whatsoever he hath thought needful for us to know, believe, and acknowledge, touching the Nature and Office of Christ."[39] The Particular Baptists' dependence on plain scripture was on display in the 1640s, but the 1677 confession fleshes out this subject and James Garrett notes that it was "the first Baptist confession to apply the word "infallible" to the Bible."[40]

These references mark a significant point of disagreement between Baptists and Quakers. The first chapter of the confession, for instance, refers to the Scripture as "the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule," in contrast to "the light of Nature," which it describes as insufficient. The main point of departure from the Westminster Confession in this chapter is the London Baptist Confession's addition of phrases emphasizing the sole authority of scripture. The confession also states that "all things necessary" are "necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture" (this replaces Westminster's phrase "may be deduced from Scripture") and that scripture provides security against "the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan" in understanding God's will.[41] The phrase "the light of Nature" predates the London Baptist Confession, and was borrowed from the Westminster Confession. But the distinction between the infallible scripture on the one hand and "nature" or "reason" on the other was a cudgel with which the Baptists would bludgeon the Quakers in the debates of the 1670s.

On a few occasions, Baptists certainly did equate the light within with reason (coming from the mind) or divine revelation. Keach wrote that Quakers "pretend/To

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[39] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 158.
[40] James Leo Garrett, *Baptist Theology: A Four Century Study*, (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2009), 74.
[41] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 248, 250. Anderson, "A Tabular Comparison."

Revelations, proudly dost accuse/All that believe thee not," and elsewhere equated the "Light, in all" with Natural Law and "the *Pagan* World." Thomas Thomson suggested of Quakers that on the basis of the light within "*Cicero* might be a *Christian* as well as thee."[42] The view that the Quakers' inner light was no different from pagan reason was probably only bolstered by such statements as William Penn's in support of the light preceding scriptures that "Pythagoras [said] thus, *God resembleth* LIGHT *and* TRUTH; *he is one; he is not* OUT *of the World.*" Likewise, Hicks's hyperbolic suggestion that "if *George Fox* do but say 'tis reveal'd to him the Earth is flat…I have no rule wherewith to disprove his pretended Revelation" and Thomson's question of whether the Quakers' light led them to speak in tongues like the apostles, perfectly reflect the Baptists' scoffing attitude towards the real origins of Quaker light.[43] The writers of the Second London Confession, producing their articles two years after the debates in question, may well have been thinking of the issues that had emerged there.

Central to the Particular Baptists' confessions of faith is also their soteriology. Their Calvinistic position on salvation, as through grace and the mediation of Christ alone, is represented in the confessions of faith in such a way as to depict the Baptist orthodoxy within the Protestant tradition. Taking a cue from John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the 1644 London Confession emphasized Christ's status as "Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church of God," as well as the mediator whose role

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[42] Benjamin Keach, *The Grand Impostor Discovered: Or, The* Quakers *Doctrine weighted in the Balance, and found wanting. A POEM, By way of Dialogue: wherein their Chief, and most Concerning Principles are laid down, and by the Authority of Gods Holy Word clearly Refuted*, (London: Printed for B. Harris at the Stationers Arms in Sweetings Rents by the Royal Exchange, 1675), v-vi; Benjamin Keach, *The Display of Glorious Grace: Or, the Covenant of Peace, opened in Fourteen Sermons Lately Preached, In which the Errors of the present Day, about Reconciliation and Justification, are Detected* (London: Printed for S. Bridge, sold by Mary Fabian, Joseph Collier, and William Marshall, 1698),129; Thomas Thompson, *The Quakers Quibbles, In Three Parts* (London: Printed for Francis Smith, 1675), 7.

[43] William Penn, *The Counterfeit Christian Detected: And the Real Quaker Justified* (London: 1674), 66-67; Hicks, *Dialogue*, 26; Thomson, *Quakers Quibbles*, 7.

"neither in the whole, nor in any part…can be transferred from him to any other." This emphasis is replicated in the 1656 Somerset Confession as well.[44] The Second London Confession also makes a clear statement against justification by works that "although reasonable *Creatures* do owe obedience unto him as their *Creator*, yet they could never have attained the reward of Life, but by some voluntary condescension on *Gods part*."[45] The confession further specifies that God justifies his people, "not by infusing Righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting, and accepting their Persons as Righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone." The existence of good works is not entirely dismissed, but in addressing such acts the Second London Confession does go on to say that Christians' "ability to do good works, is not at all of themselves; but wholly from the *Spirit* of Christ."[46] The Particular Baptists' confessions of faith, then, made clear the importance of Calvinist soteriology to their shared beliefs.

If this soteriology was key to the confessions of faith, Keach also defended these same principles as essential to orthodoxy Protestantism. When in 1675 he perceived the Quakers' light within to be similar to justification through works, he called it "Popery in a new dress."[47] Even later in the last stages of his career, Keach would continue to be immovable on the importance of this doctrine to all legitimate Christians.[48] Salvation by grace was the main theme of his sermons in the 1690s, in which he targeted in particular the works of the late Richard Baxter. He took Baxter's writings to be "but a piece of *Old*

[44] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 159, 207.
[45] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 259.
[46] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 265-266, 271.
[47] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 256-7.
[48] See Chapter 4 for a more detailed description of Keach's emphasis on soteriology in the 1690s.

Judaism," believed by those who "stumble at the *Old Stumbling-stone*."[49] In another sermon he explained, "thus is *Popery* revived amongst us, and Justification by Works asserted by these Law and Work-mongers." And if Keach held that such errors lent themselves to Judaism and Popery, he continued to link them, at least obliquely, to the Quakers: "The Moral Law and Light, in all, discovers a God, but no Christ, no Mediator: What doth the *Pagan* World know of this Covenant of Peace?"[50] The central importance of Christ's mediation, removing entirely the burden of the Law through no agency of humankind, was such that Keach regarded any who failed to appreciate it as no Christians at all. He summed up the extent of such an error, and its implications for man's understanding of Christ, thusly: "*if by the Law, any Law, a Man might be justified, Christ is dead in vain*."[51]

As exhibited in these remarks of Keach's, as well as in the confessions of faith, soteriological issues are inextricably tied to the Particular Baptists' views of Christ's role as mediator and as "Prophet, Priest, and King." A robust Calvinist view of Christ's role was key to the Particulars' soteriology, but their understanding of Christ's body and nature is also an important point of their belief. Christology is given significant space and emphasis in the confessions of faith, which anticipates and reflects the importance of Baptist attacks against the Quakers' purely "Spiritual" understanding of Christ. The Second London Confession highlights the role of Christ "to be the *Mediator* between *God* and *Man*; the Prophet, Priest and King; Head and Saviour of his Church, the heir of all

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[49] Keach, *The Marrow of True Justiication, or, Justification without Works: Containing the Substance of Two Sermons lately preached on Rom. 4.5. And by the Importunity of some gracious Christians, now published with some additions* (London: Printed for Dorman Newman at the King's Arm in Poultrey, 1692), 22-23.
[50] Keach, *Display*, 77, 129.
[51] Keach, *Marrow*, 37.

things, and judge of the world."[52] This is crucial to soteriology, but also to the Christology of Baptists in that "being very and eternal *God*…of one substance and equal with *him*," Christ

> did…take upon him mans nature, with all the Essential properties, and common infirmities thereof…was made of a *Woman*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, of the Seed of *Abraham*, and *David* according to the *Scriptures*: So that two whole, perfect and distinct natures, were inseparable joined together in one *Person*: without *conversion*, *composition*, or *confusion*: which *Person* is very *God*, and very *Man*; yet one *Christ*, the only *Mediator* between *God* and *Man*.[53]

Christ's role as mediator is here linked with his nature as both God and Man, and so the real human and divine nature of Christ is essential to the role he plays.

Important though the view of Christ's nature is to the confessions and statements of faith among the Baptists, it was also a point of open contention when the Baptists debated Quakers. Underwood has accurately observed that, while Baptists were suspicious of Quakers in that their spiritual Christ that dwells within seemed to dismiss the historical, fleshly body of Christ, Quakers had the impression that Baptists wanted to make Christ carnal, remote, and absent.[54] This disagreement was reflected in the Baptist writings of the 1670s. Both Keach and Thomas Hicks, in their respective writings, sprung upon a statement of George Whitehead's writing on this very point. Whitehead responded to the description of Christ as "*God, Man, a Person without thee*" by writing that, "This is not Scripture Language, but the *Anthropomorphites* and *Muggletonians*, who profess a Personal God, denying him to be an Infinite Spirit."[55] Both of the Baptists saw in this statement a most heterodox sort of Christology. Keach insisted that Quakers believed Christ to be only the spirit, and not the body, of Jesus, and concluded that when the

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[52] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 260.
[53] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 260-261.
[54] Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War*, 31-50.
[55] Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 13.

Quakers spoke of Christ come in the flesh "Thou dose intend thereby that Flesh of thine/And other men's, for that is thy Doctrine."[56] Hicks took the same position when he wrote that, if the light rather than the body was Jesus Christ, and the light is within Quakers, "*then whether* W. Pen *and* G. Whitehead *may not be as truly and properly called Jesus Christ*, as well as that outward Person or bodily appearance."[57] More than simply to mistake the nature of Christ's body, Keach and Hicks understood the Quakers' error to locate divinity within themselves. They not only possessed a faulty Christology but removed Christ from his rightful position and elevated themselves to his place.

The Particular Baptists thus believed the Quakers, in dissenting from their confessions of faith in essential doctrines, to embody the grossest heterodoxies. In a complementary manner, the rhetorical stance of their confessions of faith, so deeply indebted to the Westminster Confession, was that they were in all essential matters members of a shared orthodoxy with other English Protestants. The crucial aspects of this perceived orthodoxy were those points of doctrine upon which the Baptists most clearly opposed Quakerism. This tendency towards orthodoxy is reflected in the composition of the Second London Confession in 1677, which Lumpkin and Garrett agree was organized based upon the Westminster Confession. This was done with the intention of expressing "basic Christian orthodoxy and kinship to other Dissenters," in Garrett's words, and to present a united front with Presbyterians, as Lumpkin sees it.[58]

The confession presented the Baptists as existing within the more moderate, acceptable strains of dissent. The text itself acknowledged that its writers meant to

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[56] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 220-1.
[57] Hicks, *The Quaker Condemned out of his own mouth: Or, an Answer to Will. Pen's Book Entituled Reason against Railing, and Truth against Fiction* (London: Peter Parker, 1674), 28.
[58] Garrett, *Baptist Theology*,72. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 236.

replicate certain articles "finding no defect…in that fixed on by the Assembly, and after them by those of the Congregational way," and decided "to follow their example, in making use of the very same words with them both, in those articles (which are very many) wherein our faith and doctrine is the same with theirs."[59] A stated intention of this confession is to demonstrate the common ground of the Baptists with Presbyterians and Independents on many points.

The 1677 confession presents itself quite explicitly as a restatement of the 1644 London Confession which "in good measure answered…that we were no way guilty of those Heterodoxies and fundamental errors, which had too frequently been charged upon us without ground."[60] The confession is then explicitly linked with a defence against the accusation of heterodoxy, and it goes on to establish that the Baptists are in accord with other good Protestants elsewhere. Just as they shared much with their fellow dissenters, the writers specified that they shared the articles of belief with "orthodox confessions…of the Protestants of diverse nations and cities," and wrote to express "hearty agreement with them, in that wholesome Protestant doctrine."[61] The confession, then, intended not only to see common cause between Particular Baptists and Presbyterians and Independents, but with a broader pan-European Protestant consensus.

These very claims to shared orthodoxy make all the more striking the complete intransigence of both men and their associates when it came to debates with the Quakers. The same poet who regretted the terrible division of English Protestantism felt altogether justified in calling Quakers Jews, Pagans and Papists, while the Calvinistic leader who joined voices with General Baptists and tried to draw common ground with conformity

[59] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 245.
[60] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 244.
[61] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 245.

found himself at the centre of a dispute in which his brethren denied the Quaker's very Christianity. The stakes of the dissenters' disputes in London from 1672-75 were of such ferocity, as we shall see, precisely because they were centred around those issues that the Particular Baptists believed to be essential to the broader orthodoxy of Protestantism, and incontrovertible tenets of their own confessional identity.

The Dispute over Hicks's *Dialogue*

The dynamic of Particular Baptist orthodoxy opposed to Quaker heterodoxy was on display between 1672 and 1675. From Thomas Hicks' printed dialogues, and the debates they occasioned, to Benjamin Keach's poetic response in 1675, the particular disagreements between Baptists and Quakers were on full display. Both Hicks's original writings and his subsequent exchanges with George Whitehead focused on the Baptist's presentation of Quaker heterodoxy. This particular controversy began with Hicks writing *Dialogue Between a Christian and a Quaker* in 1672, to which George Whitehead responded with *The Dipper Plung'd*. In the following year, Hicks would offer *A Continuation of the Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker* as a riposte to Whitehead, upon which William Penn entered the exchange with *Reason Against Railing*.

These preliminary skirmishes set the stage for the dispute to take off with wider participation in 1674, when Hicks continued the controversy with *The Quaker Condemned out of his own mouth*, explicitly responding to Penn, who reacted with *The Counterfeit Christian Detected*. Penn added a one page address "by another Hand," (Whitehead himself, if the Baptist account is to be trusted) which demanded a response from the Particular Baptists of London with respect to the writings of Hicks. At this

juncture, the dispute over the *Dialogue* became not simply an exchange of polemic between individuals, but a public confrontation between two communities.

Hicks's *The Quakers Appeal Answered* records a meeting of Baptist ministers at Barbican, called in August 1674 on account of this controversy. This publication represented the public response of the Baptists to Penn and Whitehead. The preface to this account carries the names of William Kiffin, Daniel Dyke, Thomas Paul, Hanserd Knollys, and Henry Forty, and quotes the challenge from *Counterfeit Christian* in its entirety. Whitehead had written that if Baptist teachers and elders would not clear themselves of Hicks, "*we may take it for granted, that you own his work, and may justly deal with him, and pursue him…as the* Baptists great Champion, peculiar Agent, or Representative."[62] Whitehead and Penn, in offering this challenge, sought either to confirm or deny that Hicks spoke for the Baptists. Even before directly challenging the Baptists to a debate Whitehead had addressed Kiffin in his first response to Hicks, asking if the *Dialogues* contradictions do good credit to the Baptists.[63] If, as they might have hoped, Kiffin and the rest of the London pastors disavowed Hicks, the matter would be settled and Hicks undermined as being, as Penn put, "*no better* then a meer *Janizary* in Religion…a kind of homily-Hireling."[64] If, as happened in the event, the Baptists supported their coreligionist, the battle lines would be drawn. The Quakers saw the controversy with Hicks as a matter to which the London congregations had to respond as a group, and in August of 1674 they finally provoked a response.

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[62] Thomas Hicks, *The Quakers Appeal Answered, or a full Relation of the Occasion, Progress, and Issue of a Meeting held in Barbican, the 28th of August last past* (London: Printed for Peter Parker, 1674), ii-iii.
[63] Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 8.
[64] William Penn, *Reason against Railing, And Truth against Fiction. Being An Answer to those Two late Pamphlets, Intituled, A Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker, and the Continuation of the Dialogue, &c. by one Thomas Hicks, an Anabaptist Teacher* (London: 1673), iii.

Quakers seem to have distributed volumes at Baptist churches in an act of throwing down the gauntlet. The Baptists obliged the Quakers with the sort of communal confrontation that was implied in this challenge. They endorsed the works of Hicks and invited his opponents to a disputation at the Barbican meeting-house. This invitation bears the names of Kiffin, Knollys, Paul, and Forty, as well as Lawrence Wise and James Jones, and the Baptist participants at the first debate included Kiffin and Hicks themselves, along with Thomas Plant and Jeremiah Ives.[65] The Baptist response, then, was communal and public, defended the dialogues as statements on their behalf, and received the support of the most notable Particular Baptist ministers in London.

The stakes of the debates were communal reputation. Penn clearly understood this point when he characterized Hicks's representation of Quakers (in admittedly hyperbolic terms) as "no less then a *Rape*, because a violent Robbery committed upon those that go under that Name," as well as when he complained during a debate that the Baptists had responded "so publickly, with such very hard Measure, to the great and undeserved Reproach of our Principles, Profession and Persons."[66] Whitehead likewise claimed that the *Dialogue* reflected badly on Baptists as a whole, writing that it "surely will add no Credit to the *Baptists* Cause, nor Convict others." His published challenge to the Baptist churches was surely intended to sully their reputation publicly.[67] The Baptists saw the debate in communal terms as well, as Ives asserted that when opinions like the Quakers, "*have been among the* Baptists*, they have born Testimony against it*," and he challenged

[65] Hicks, *Quakers Appeal*, v.
[66] Penn, *Reason*, 3; Mead et al, *Brief Narrative*, 11.
[67] Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 3.

the Quakers to show that Baptists had ever done the same.[68] This confrontation should be seen as a public response to public slights, during which each side stood in defence of their communal reputation against the other.

After the challenge was made in August 1674, there was some delay before the first disputation took place on 9 October at the Baptist church in Barbican. Accounts from both sides agree that there were some logistical issues in arranging the debate, after the Baptists wrote letters intended for Penn and Whitehead but, neither man being in London at the time, left the letters with the Quaker William Mead. This initial delay and those that followed gave occasion for each side to blame the other for obstruction, which grievances they would air in published accounts.[69] The Barbican debate was brought to an end before the matter had been concluded to satisfaction, apparently due to a large crack that was forming in the meeting house, and a second debate was arranged for 16 October at the Quaker meeting house at Wheeler Street.[70] When this second meeting came to a close, the public disputations were over, but the controversy over them was not.

The later months of 1674 saw conflicting Baptist and Quaker accounts of the debates themselves, in which each sought to depict themselves as the victorious party and condemn the conduct of their opponents. William Mead collaborated with John Osgood and others in providing Quaker accounts of each meeting, titled *A Brief Account* and *A Brief Narrative* respectively, while Hicks himself wrote an account of the Barbican

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[68] William Mead, W. Welch, J. Osgood, J. Claypool, W. Shewen, E. Man, and C. Plumsted, *A Brief Narrative of the Second Meeting Between the People Called Quakers and Baptists At the Meeting-Place, near Wheeler-Street, London* (London: 1674), 45.

[69] Thomas Plant, *Contest for Christianity, Or, A Faithful Relation of two late Meetings Between The Baptists and the Quakers; The One, on the 9th of October 1674 in Barbican. The other, on the 16th of the same Month in Wheeler-Street 1674* (London: Printed for Francis Smith, and Jonathan Robinson, 1674), 4-6.

[70] Mead et al, *Brief Account*, 27; Plant, *Contest*, 25, 26-38. See Plant for exchange of letters after the first meeting.

meeting titled *The Quakers Appeal Answered* and Thomas Plant's *Contest for Christianity* provided Baptist accounts of both disputations. A further contribution, apparently on the Baptist side of the occasion, was made by the anonymous *Quakers Ballad*, which gave a satirical verse account of both aimed at making the Quakers look ridiculous. When, in 1675, Keach wrote and had published his own version of a Baptist-Quaker dialogue, *The Grand Impostor Discovered*, he would have had a wealth of topical sources to provide him with his material, and while the communal confrontation as such did not play out explicitly in his work, his representation of Quakers and their theology closely resembled those of his Baptist contemporaries.

Obviously the conflicting Baptist and Quaker accounts of the disputations sought to present the arguments of their own group as being the more convincing, but their descriptions go beyond this sort of disagreement in trying to bring the atmosphere of the debates and the conduct of others into disrepute. In the least subtle of such representations, the anonymous *Quakers Ballad* satirically described the conduct of the Quakers at the Barbican meeting, saying, "A Rabble thrust in from each end of the Town/And before half an agreement could be laid down/In less time than a man can a pot of Ale swallow/'twas confirm'd with a hoop, and deny'd with a hallow." At the end of the second debate the Quakers "went on with bawling as high as before."[71] This image of the Quakers' supporters, as unruly people of the meaner sort, is replicated in less obvious terms elsewhere, as when Thomas Thomson cites the "Clamour," "Noise" and "Disorder" at the Barbican meeting as an instance of the Quakers' "unchristian Carriage."[72]

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[71] Anon., *The Quakers Ballad: or, an Hymn of Triumph and Exhultation for their Victories, at the late great Disputes by them held with the Baptists* (London: Printed for James Nayler, 1674). This satirical work was, of course, not actually printed for the infamous Quaker James Nayler, who was long dead at the time.
[72] Thomson, *Quakers Quibbles*, 10.

Conflicting accounts described not only the arguments but the physical environment and the crowd's actions.

The Quaker *Brief Account* of the Barbican meeting takes up the subject of the physical environment when it complains that the Baptists had failed to provide "Equal Place" for each side. Instead, the Baptists were said to have crammed the meeting place with their own people so there was "scarce Breathing-room allotted in all that great Assembly for much above Twenty of us."[73] The crowd became participants in the debate itself, too, as they made an "indecent Noise" to interrupt William Penn and responded as if on cue to gestures from Jeremy Ives.[74] The *Brief Narrative* regarding the second debate likewise has the Baptists "raising a noise" to interrupt the proceedings on no less than seven occasions, while "the People" (Quakers) expressed support for Penn and his fellow disputants in a more civil manner.[75] Thomas Plant also shows the crowd's interventions with shouts of "Answer" (when a disputant was being evasive), "Aye," or "No."[76] But the crowd did not play merely the role of a classical chorus in Plant's dramatization of events: when Baptist William Russell suspected an attendee of the dispute to be a Jesuit, and said as much, Penn's complaint was not merely that the accusation was unwarranted but that "such words were enough to provoke the people to stone him as he went home."[77] Penn's statement suggests that the ever-present audience brought with it the possibility not only of disrepute, but of violent censure as well. The depiction of the crowd throughout indicates the public nature of the dispute and the presence of members of a community as stakeholders.

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[73] Mead et al., *Brief Account*, 4.
[74] Mead et al, *Brief Account*, 22, 23.
[75] Mead et al, *Brief Narrative*, 22-23, 24, 31, 34, 47, 57.
[76] Plant, *Contest for Christianity*, 49, 55, 57, 62, 88, 93.
[77] Plant, *Contest for Christianity*, 70-73.

Aside from the turbulent dynamic of an interested and unruly audience, though, one difficult aspect of the Quaker-Baptist debates is that the two sides were not even in agreement as to what the subject of the disputes was. While the Baptists took it to be a question of proving the Quaker's heterodoxy along much the same lines as Hicks had already done, the Quakers understood the subject to be the unchristian conduct and dishonesty of Hicks himself. The *Quakers Ballad* humorously characterized the Quakers as deciding before the Wheeler-street debate that, "If we cannot confute, we must tyre them out," and thus "Four hours and more we dispute in and out/To know what it was we should dispute about."[78] While this is a hyperbolic and partisan account, the question of the proper topic of debate was a live issue during disputation.

For Penn and his company, the question of the Baptist writer's conduct and character was front and centre, an issue to be addressed by the Baptists as a whole. Penn wrote that his behaviour "should reflect Shame upon *W. Kiffin*, with his Elders, &c. to suffer such irreverent Trash to come out of their Congregation."[79] He accounted Hicks as a "Counterfeit Christian" whose writings depicted a "False Quaker," and the Quakers tried to make Hicks being "no Christian" the real topic of debate.[80] While George Keith complained in print that the Baptists acted to "evade the Pursuance of our Charge against *T.H.*," the Quakers' account of the second disputation included a lengthy argument over the subject of the debate itself, of which George Whitehead said "whether this *Anabaptist* hath manifested himself a *Christian*…or can be proved a *Forger*, and no *Christian*, is the

[78] Anon., *Quakers Ballad*.
[79] Penn, *Counterfeit Christian*, 75.
[80] Penn, *Counterfeit Christian*, 11-12.

Matter in Hand."[81] In the event of this second disputation Jeremy Ives said he intended to prove that Hicks was correct in stating that Quakers was not Christians, and he proceeded in that manner, but the Baptists still needed to respond to the principal charge of the Quakers, at least in passing.

This fundamental complaint was that the *Dialogue* and its sequels was a false representation. Penn's objection to the *Dialogue*'s "False Quaker" has already been noted, and Whitehead wrote that Hicks was "Personating the *Quakers* with his own Ridiculous Falshoods and Consequences; together with scornful Canting Language, and Ridiculous Contradictions and Inconsistencies." Hicks responded that in spite of the fact that the Quaker in his work was fictional, "the Dialogue mentions several that are, and were, approved Quakers, (viz.) G. *Whitehead, G. Fox, James Naylor, Crisp, Richard Hubberthrone,* and *Ben. Furley*" and that he had given appropriate references to their writings.[82] Hicks, then, believed that his dialogue, though crafted in his own words, was an accurate and justifiable depiction of Quakers, based on the words of Quaker authors themselves.

The Baptists responded to the accusations of forgery with their meeting in August. Kiffin, Knollys, and the other twenty men who made up the meeting examined the *Dialogue* and found that all quotations from Quakers "are truly recited out of those Books to which they refer."[83] At the subsequent disputation at Barbican, Robert Ferguson defended the style of the *Dialogue* by saying that Cicero himself used a dialogue to prove the existence of God, but Penn responded that Hicks did not use dialogue in such a

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[81] George Keith, *George Keith's Vindication from the Forgeries & Abuses of T. Hicks, & W. Kiffin, With the rest of his Confederate Brethren of the Barbican-Meeting, held London the 28th of the 6th Month, 1674* (London: 1674), 4-5; Mead et al, *Brief Narrative*, 27-28.
[82] Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 3; Hicks, *Continuation*, 2
[83] Hicks, *Quakers Appeal*, 32.

manner, but "unfairly and unjustly misrepresented our Expressions, Principles and Religion."[84] While this matter of integrity was a particular issue for the Quakers, the Baptists themselves gave short shrift to their objections. Instead of dealing much further with the honesty of the *Dialogue* and its sequels, they continued their attacks on Quaker errors, and in this respect the original printed polemics and the public disputes are made up of substantially the same variety of arguments.

Baptist Orthodoxy against the Quakers, 1672-74

As Ives stated in the Wheeler-Street debate, the Baptists understood their task to be the support of Hicks's dialogues and their arguments. The disputations themselves largely replicated, in the eyes of the Baptists at least, the dynamics of the fictional dialogues. The stakes were clear. Hicks had stated in an uncompromising fashion that the Quakers denied Christ as mediator and were "a people under the Immediate Judgement of God." Their errors included denying the role of Christ as Mediator and "The holy Scriptures are esteemed (by them) inferior to their own pamphlets; yea they render them to be of no more Authority than the Fables of Esop [sic]."[85] The utter heterodoxy of Quakers on these points was the focus of Baptist ire, as it denied those aspects of belief that were most crucial to their understanding of Protestant Orthodoxy.

Hicks and the Baptist disputants who supported his writings understood the views of the Quakers as a rejection of scriptural authority. While the role of the Quakers' light within was to be that which moved Christians to believe and understand scripture, Hicks represented this belief as a complete inversion. Placing the emphasis on the light within

[84] Mead et al, *Brief Account*, 15.
[85] Hicks, *Dialogue*, epistle to reader.

in this manner was akin to saying that, if a father gave his son a command, "The *child* may reply *Thou must wait for my obedience till I be moved*. The like may every subject and servant plead."[86] While the Quakers themselves understood the light within to be their guide, Hicks argued that the extent of their heterodoxy was such that their own light would allow outright disregard of God's word. If men only understood and obeyed scripture insofar as the light within moved them, "Then the Reason why men ought to live up to these holy Rules laid down in the Scriptures, is not, *from that Divine Authority that is impressed upon them*. Men are no further obliged either to Faith or obedience than the Light within moves them thereunto."[87] Put differently, truth was not held in the word of God, but in the soul of man, which debased scripture as the basis of belief and elevated a quality within man to be the arbiter of truth. In a more extreme instance, Hicks had Quakers saying that they might burn their bibles and serve Christ just as well.[88]

The Quakers responded to harsh representations by Hicks by saying that he and the Baptists were profane and legalistic in their emphasis upon outward ordinances and slavish obedience to the written word. In the disputation at Barbican, Penn made a statement as to the usefulness of the light within with respect to the dialogue of Cicero, that "It seems our Light is good for somewhat, seeing a *Heathen* by that Light could so admirably prove a God," and observing that knowledge of God could, and did, come from within rather than without.[89] While Hicks and his coreligionists, as is noted above, compared the Light to the mere reason of pagans, the Quakers tried to undermine the

[86] Hicks, *A Continuation*, 69.
[87] Hicks, *Quaker Condemned*, 50-51.
[88] Hicks, *Continuation*, 71.
[89] Mead et al, *Brief Account*, 15.

emphasis on scripture as a focus on outward things and carnal ordinances by showing that knowledge of God preceded the scriptures.

To this end, ordinances and formalism were implicated in the debate. Whitehead objected to the claim that inner light could give heathens "*Moral Goodness*" that was "*Commendable*," but that the light "*could not direct them how that Worship should be performed*."[90] Penn wrote similarly that the first churches among the Gentiles did not have the scriptures, so "*a Measure of that Holy Spirit, which was given to every one to profit with, was their Rule*, and therefore ought to be, our great Rule and Guide." In contrast to these Gospel Churches (and their Restoration Quaker counterparts), Baptists "set up themselves in a Form, without Power," based on outward obedience to scripture.[91]

Hicks believed that ordinances from scripture were necessary for worship, and indeed the Baptist namesake practice of baptism was based upon precise adherence to one such ordinance. The Quaker response was that scriptural ordinances of that sort were taken to be akin to the strict formalism of Rome. Far from admitting that the Quakers were in rebellion against these scriptural ordinances, Thomas Rudyard wrote of their enforcement that, "each Party pretending no less Authority then the holy Scriptures for his Perswasion, [it] has Occasioned by the *Papists* and *Anabaptists* in *Germany* and elsewhere more Massacres, Rebellions, Murders and Acts of Cruelty, then all other Articles or Opinions." [92] The pairing of Anabaptists with Popery is significant, as the presumed predecessors of English Baptists are said to be like the persecuting Roman Catholics in their formality and intolerance. In this sense, of carnal ordinances and lack of

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[90] Whitehead, *Dipper*, 10.
[91] Penn, *Reason Against Railing*, 114, 44.
[92] Thomas Rudyard, *The Barbican-Cheat Detected, Or, Injustice Arraigned: Being a Brief and Sober Disquisition of the Procedure of the Anabaptists Later-Erected Judicature in Barbican, London, the 28th of the Moneth called August, 1674* (London: 1674), 29.

spirituality, Whitehead likewise called Hicks a "Prophane Romancer, and Irreligious Miscreant against the Light of Christ Within."[93]

If the Quakers regarded Baptists as being no less formal and legalistic than Rome, Baptists thought the Quakers had no sense of restraint and no respect for God's word. The hyperbole of the anonymous *Quakers Ballad* reflects the opinion Baptists had for their opponents. In this work, the Quakers suggest that Muhammad himself had "as much claim to [God's inspiration] as we." The Baptists claimed that if the light within was revelation from God it should be verified by miracles, and the *Quakers Ballad* citesd the Quakers' only real miracle to be "That so many should Scripture and reason forsake/And in our ridiculous whimsies partake."[94] While the ballad reached excesses of misrepresentation, it was not too far off of Hicks's own characterization. Of Quaker disregard for the truth of scripture he wrote that, "if *George Fox* do but say 'tis reveal'd to him the Earth is flat, it must be believ'd, because I have no rule wherewith to disprove his pretended Revelation."[95] In contrast to the reasonable beliefs of the Baptists and ordinances drawn from infallible scripture, the Quakers followed no rule but their own extraordinary claims.

While much was said of the issue of scripture, Hicks connected the light within not only to faulty Quaker views on scripture, but to their mistaken understanding of salvation. The role of the light within was also to lead men to salvation, and Hicks wrote in response "I grant, that every man…hath a *light* in them, but this doth not prove that this *light* in every man is *Christ*, nor yet sufficient (of it self) to guide to Salvation."[96] If

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[93] Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 5-6.
[94] Anon, *Quakers Ballad*.
[95] Hicks, *Dialogue*, 26.
[96] Hicks, *Dialogue*, 7.

Penn was intransigent against the Baptists on the matter of the light within, he was no less harsh in his opposition to Particular Baptist soteriology. Their greatest error, he wrote, was to believe in justification through Christ, without "Inward Righteousness" through the light working within. This much "would be to say, *that by the Obedience of one, many shall be made Righteous who notwithstanding remain Disobedient and Rebellious*" and Penn writes that such a doctrine is "NO LESS THEN THE DOCTRINE OF DEVILS."[97] Hicks took exception specifically to this soteriology, and highlighted Penn's statements. These were presented in a kind of reverse catechism, in which the questions provided Baptist orthodoxy, such as "What think you of Justification by that Righteousness which Christ in his own person fulfilled for us, wholly without us?" to which Penn's writings responded that it is "a Doctrine of Devills," and that "Justification is not from imputation of anothers righeousness."[98] A central concern for Hicks, as for Keach, was that the light within would not provide the revelations of the scripture, nor access to salvation that comes only through Christ's death and resurrection (knowledge of which, by way of connection, only scripture can provide).[99]

Both salvation and scripture, moreover, reflect the importance of Christology in Baptist hostility to their opponents. To know Christ through scripture and to be saved by his death and resurrection alone, are each based upon his nature as a "*God, Man, a Person without thee*" as Hicks put it, whose life, death, and resurrection were real outward and historical events that must be known and understood as such, rather than as merely internal spiritual matters. That the Quakers seemed to reject Jesus Christ as a man

[97] Penn, *Reason Against Railing*, 74.
[98] Hicks, *Continuation*, 83.
[99] See Hicks, *Dialogue*, 22-40. Here Hicks elaborates on the need of scripture, justification only through the resurrection of Christ, and the connection between the two.

struck at the heart of Baptist orthodoxy, and Hicks represents them referring to Christ's office of Priest, Prophet, and King, which the Baptists' own confessions had clearly asserted, as no more than "fleshly Conceivings."[100] The soteriological role and human nature of Christ being rejected in the works of Penn and Whithead spilled from the original printed debates into the public disputations.

As already noted, Whitehead responded to Hicks's description of "*a Person without thee*" by saying that "This is not Scripture Language, but the *Anthropomorphites* and *Muggletonians*, who profess a Personal God, denying him to be an Infinite Spirit." Hicks quoted this statement in his *Continuation* as confirmation of Quaker heterodoxy from Whitehead's own pen.[101] Whitehead attempted to clarify his meaning at the Barbican debate. He had written that Christ without was "a Design of *Satan*, to keep some Men in Carnal imaginations, and Dark Thoughts of an *Human, Personal Christ*," and went on to say that this representation was dangerous because of its effect, "that they neglect to wait for Christ's Inward and Spiritual appearance."[102] Christology became a point of difference, like scripture and soteriology, in which the Quaker represented Baptists as carnal rather than spiritual and distracted by external things. Whitehead also made the accusation that belief in Christ without denied the existence of Christ as a spirit before the incarnation, saying "they take Part with the *Socinians*."[103] He counterattacked with an appeal to the internal and spiritual but the Baptists maintained his heterodoxy. In particular, Hicks and Jeremy Ives seized upon the uncertainty in how he and his coreligionists related the person and the spirit of Christ

[100] Hicks, *Continuation*, 77.
[101] Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 13; Hicks, *Continuation,* 41.
[102] Mead et al, *Brief Account*, 16-17.
[103] Mead et al, *Brief Account*, 24.

Hicks had quoted Whitefield denying that Christ was ever seen with carnal eyes, which seemed to deny the human nature of Christ. George Keith responded that these words merely made a distinction between the man and the spiritual Christ.[104] Thomas Plant recorded Ives's response to this distinction and its apparent absurdity.

> if I should write…that I had never seen *W.P.* [William Penn] and *G.K.* [George Keith] in all my life, and they should tell me I lyed, because I saw them at this Meeting; May I not Answer them with this Distinction, as they do me, And say, that *W.P.* and *G.K.* consist of Soul and Body; and because I never saw their Souls, which is their more Excellent Part, Therefore I never saw them.[105]

Plant depicted this rhetorical attack as the climax of the Wheeler-Street disputation, and their (supposedly) weak responses are scarcely noted. For the Baptist, the difference between his own people and the Quakers was made clear by their equivocations over the nature of Christ, which were little but evasions to cover their rejection of Christ's real existence as both God and man.

A contemporary publication by Thomas Thompson, *The Quakers Quibbles*, agreed with Plant in giving a critical account of the debates and the Quakers' evasive, quibbling objections. He contrasted their uncertain Christology with straightforward statements of their doctrines, such as that "the *Body* of Christ *is not, nor was, the true Christ*, but *the Spirit in that Body*," and that Christ "*is not a Person without us*." These led to his final assertion that "necessarily you must hold, that *Christ died not*…For *how is it possible for you to Believe really that Christ died,* when you hold *that Christ is only God, and God is and ever was immortal*."[106] This publication represented a forceful statement of the principal Baptist objection to Quaker Christology. Thompson's religious affiliation is uncertain, and in spite of apparently siding with the Baptists, he referred to

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[104] Mead et al, *Brief Account*, 20.
[105] Plant, *Contest*, 24-25.
[106] Thompson, *Quakers Quibbles*, 20-21.

the dispute as an apparent outsider.[107] In any case, he stated the implications of faulty Quaker Christology: if the human body was not Christ, Christ was not crucified, and the most important facts of the death and the resurrection, and the salvation they granted, is thrown into doubt.

In rejecting the Quakers, and doing so along the same lines as Hicks and Ives had done, Thompson might provide us with an instance of a fellow Protestant who was moved to distinguish between the errors of Quakers and the basic orthodoxy the Baptists presented themselves as maintaining. Certainly, the disputants made some attempt to present the Quakers as a distinct group, outside of Protestantism. Hicks suggested as much by writing his dialogue between a "Christian" and a "Quaker." The Quaker was no Christian at all. In the debate, too, the Baptists presented themselves not merely speaking for the Baptist congregations against the Quakers, but for Protestants generally. When Whitehead referred to the "Anabaptist Christian" from Hicks's *Dialogue*, Plant denied that the "Christian" in the dialogue was necessarily a Baptist, saying "there are more Christians than the Anabaptists."[108] The Baptist defence of orthodoxy, Plant implied, might as easily be made by any other Protestants, conforming or nonconforming. Indeed the Quakers' beliefs regarding the body of Christ, the scripture and ordinances, justification and the light within are attacked in Richard Blome's 1660 polemic against the Quakers much as they are in the Baptist works.[109]

Whether or not Thomas Plant's account of the disputations succeeded in making common cause with other Protestants against Quakers, Plant and Ives rejected the notion

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[107] Thompson, *Quakers Quibbles*, 28-29.
[108] Plant, *Contest*, 59.
[109] Blome, *Fanatick History*, 124-135. These points appear as headings regarding the Quakers' errors in Blome's book.

that the Quakers could make such common cause for themselves. Plant's account of the second disputation closes with Penn saying a few words "about the Martyrs in Queen *Maries* days, that they had the inward Testimony of the Lord within them, and they could not dispute for their Religion, yet they could burn and suffer." He was clearly attempting to draw parallels between his group's place in the Restoration, and that of the Protestant martyrs of the previous century. Plant closed his account with Ives's sharp response to this claim: "But they were no Quakers. *The People laugh*, and here the Baptists withdraw."[110] Large though the Marian persecutions loomed over the mental world of English Protestants, association with that Protestant tradition was not something the Baptists were prepared to allow to the Quakers.

Keach and the Quakers

When Keach entered this conflict with his own offering in 1675, his verse encapsulated not only the theological issues at the centre of the debate, but also the context of the dispute and the manner in which his fellow Baptists had presented themselves. His *Grand Impostor Discovered* consists of a dialogue between a Professor and a Quaker not unlike Hicks's *Dialogue*. It nowhere mentions the disputations of 1674 as such, but there are indications that he was making an addition to those debates. Aside from similar content to the Baptist-Quaker dialogue, *Grand Impostor* opens with an image that seems to replicate the public disputation. The print shows two groups facing one another in a church, the leader of one group saying "Turne to the Light within," while the opposing Christian says "To the Law and testimony." The print also contains an allegory of the Quakers having been "Weighed in the balance and found wanting," with a scale standing between the two

[110] Plant, *Contest*, 102.

groups. The Quaker had thrown many books and pamphlets onto the scale full of "Boasted perfection, notionary things," but "His Arguments are Light as Vanity/One single Book (God's word) doth overpoize/Whole Heaps of such poor superficiall Toys," and the bible placed in the other side does indeed hold all of the Quaker books aloft.[111] These images have nothing in common with the poem itself, which is a dialogue between two individuals, but depicting a public confrontation between two communities may illustrate that Keach had the disputations in mind.

In another possible allusion to the debates at Barbican and Wheeler-Street, when Keach's Professor is questioning his opponent on Scripture, "A Question I'le propound, and do desire/You'l Answer plan, and not equivocate/As many of you Quakers do of late."[112] As we have seen, the *Quakers Ballad* and *The Quakers Quibbles* each observed that the Friends had recently been equivocating and quibbling. During the second disputation Ives also had mocked the absurdity of their minor distinctions, and it may very well be to this exchange that Keach is referring. The characteristics of Keach's anti-Quaker poem, along with the timing of its publication, certainly make it seem as if the work is a commentary on the public disputations that had recently taken place.

Furthermore, the style of the polemic, a dialogue in verse, could hardly have been better calculated as a means of dismissing the Quakers' complaints about Hicks having misrepresented them through a "forgery," and "*Romance*."[113] If Whitehead and Penn accused Hicks of falsely "Personating the *Quakers*" with an invented dialogue that put words and curses into Quaker mouths, the obvious fiction of the rhyming Quaker in *The*

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[111] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, this unnumbered sheet is inserted after the Epistle to the Reader before the numbered pages begin.
[112] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 219.
[113] Penn, *Reason Against Railing*, 161.

Grand Impostor Discovered was that much worse.[114] Of course, Keach did not purport to describe real events, though the Quaker's language and assertions are meant to represent accurately the Quakers' errors. Much like the *Dialogue*, Keach quoted directly from George Fox and Whitehead at relevant points in order to demonstrate that if his dialogue was not real, it was still accurate.[115]

The Grand Impostor Discovered, like the *Dialogue*, gave voice to the author's arguments through an ambiguously named disputant. The "Professor," like Hicks's "Christian," is nowhere specified to be a Baptist, even though he represents a Baptist's point of view. In fact, there are only two real mentions of Baptists as such in Keach's poem. Towards the end of the poem the Baptist version of perfection, "Christ's Holiness" is contrasted with the Quakers' pretension of perfection in their light within, but this is merely in passing.[116] A more substantive discussion of Baptists came when the Quaker demands the Professor to "Shew us the Baptists sign, or shew us why/Without a sign they are to be believ'd." To this Keach responded that the Baptists need no sign because unlike the Quakers they do not produce "Scriptureless Opinions," and "Christians are not at all oblig'd to show/A Miracle to prove their practice by/Whose Faith and Practice Christ did justifie." In so doing, the Professor's affiliation remains vague, Keach using "they" rather than "we" to refer to Baptists.[117] The Baptists are mentioned by name later in the same discussion, when the Professor says of the Quakers, "You take great pains to make the World believe/The Baptists apprehensions are so low/They think it is sufficient if they know/That Christ, who by the Jews was Crucifi'd/Is he by whom we must be

[114] Whitehead, *Dipper Plung'd*, 3.
[115] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 252, 246.
[116] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 295.
[117] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 277, 278.

Justifi'd."[118] This description of the "low apprehensions" of the Baptists is in itself a statement of Protestant fundamentals.

That the Professor defends Baptists under the pretence that he is not one of them suggests rhetorically that the Particular Baptists, in their late disputes with the Quakers, had represented orthodoxy of a mere Christian sort, which might receive the support of any right thinking Protestant. Just as Plant denied the "Christian" in Hicks's dialogue was necessarily a Baptist, the deliberate ambiguity of Keach's mouthpiece suggests that if "there are more Christians than the Anabaptists," so too are there more "Professors."[119] The crucial difference was that though there may be many sorts of Christians, the Baptists were among them, and the Quakers were not. In fact, the entirety of the verse dialogue might leave one under the impression that Keach was not speaking specifically for the Baptists at all. There is no mention at all of those ordinances (believer's baptism, forms of worship, episcopacy) that separated Baptists from Conformity, leaving the differences between Baptist and any other sort of Christian out of sight. Keach's focus, like that of the debates, was on scripture, Christology, and justification. The Baptist polemicist, then, was not producing a work to defend the doctrine of the Baptists so much as to denounce that of the Quakers in support of broader Protestant orthodoxy.

The Epistle to the Reader that provides a preface to *The Grand Impostor* emphasizes exactly the sort of heterodoxy the Baptists had attacked in the earlier publications. Keach opened with a sketch of man's origins, original sin, and God sending prophets and Christ to bring mankind a rule and salvation. He described the danger of the

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[118] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 290. Of course, the observation that the Quakers were endeavouring to bring the Baptists into disrepute in all likelihood refers to the 1674 debates as well, in which, as we have seen, they explicitly wished to put the Baptists' public reputation on the line.
[119] Plant, *Contest*, 59.

Quakers' errors, that "The fullness of the Godhead bodily/…the *Quakers* do deny/Or by their feigned words would make us doubt/Of Christs informing man from words without." They put in the place of these things "no other rule to worship by/But th' land its Authority," but Keach presented scripture as the best antidote to error and himself as a "real friend" in contrast to the false friends, the Quakers.[120] The stakes of the dialogue that follows are not simply differences of opinion between believers of different sorts, but of a set of errors that distance Christianity from its very origins. The light within, a challenge to the authority of Christ without, is Keach's target as it debases the authority of scripture, the body of Christ, and the justification of sinners.

Ordinances are implicated in the issue of the written word of God, and Keach's Quaker says as much, warning that, "The Living thou dost seek amongst the Dead/And art by Forms, and by the Letter led."[121] The Quaker supports the authority of the light within by saying that a light coming from God cannot err, and equates the rule of scripture with formality and carnal learning. In contrast, the Professor equates this light with that which allowed Heathens to recognize that there is a God, and not to commit many sins. He specifies that "by this Light most easily they found/Ther was a God who did all things Create/When on his works they came to Meditate," but that it was insufficient in that "th' manner of his Worship they can't find."[122] The scripture was necessary for that purpose. Keach presented the Quakers as opposed to all forms of worship (hardly a novel statement, considering the Quakers' long-standing hostility to

[120] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, Epistle to the Reader.
[121] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 195.
[122] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 203.

formality[123]), although in so doing he avoided referring to particular ordinances, such as forms of prayer and baptism. Keeping the subject of ordinances from scripture general, his criticism of the Quakers kept its non-denominational character.

While the light within's rejection of forms was problematic, Keach drove home its most fundamental limitation towards the end of his work. His Professor asked of those that have not read the scriptures, "If from their best refined light they knew/Jesus of *Nazareth* whom *Pilate* slew," or if there were any who thus "have understood/The efficacie of Christs precious blood."[124] In point of fact, Keach observed that there were no Heathens who came to know Christ from their Light or reason without scripture. While the Quaker claims that in the case of St. Paul and the Corinthians "light had shined in their hearts," the Professor counters that the they were in the dark until "saving grace from God did thither come."[125] Likewise, Keach specified that Paul followed his inner light when he persecuted the Christians and that "'Twas from a voice without (he is convicted/Not from a light within) he is directed/Not by the dictates of some inward motion/Nor by his Fancy or conceited notion."[126] In essence, Keach's statement against the Quakers' light within saw that light closing off access to basic knowledge of Christ's existence.

If the light within led Quakers away from scripture and prevented them from knowing Christ through God's word, it also distorted their understanding of Christ's nature. While in appearances Quakers believed in Jesus, and within the dialogue the

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[123] We can see such opposition to the letter of scripture and forms based on it as far back as the 1653 "Truth Cleared from Scandalls," in which the Quaker Farnworth debates a Baptists, saying "the Saints…teacher is not without them in a booke, but within them, out of all bookes: they that are guided by the Spirit of god, are the sons of god, Rom.8:16" (23).
[124] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 286.
[125] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 202-4, 209.
[126] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 267.

Quaker says that Christ came in the flesh, Keach believed this to be dissembling. His Professor responds that, "Thou dose intend thereby that Flesh of thine/And other men's, for that is the Doctrine" and proceeds to reveal the Quaker doctrine that Christ is the spirit, not the body, of Jesus, and concomitantly "You don't believe the Christ did dye at all." Keach represents some equivocation by the Quaker, who says "Within that body I do own Christ's come," but inevitably he confirms his error by saying that Joseph asked Pilate for the "body" of Christ, no more, and declaring "Cursed is he that maketh Flesh his Arm."[127]

The opposition of flesh to spirit, common in Quakers' counterattacks, is well represented here. Either for effect, or to confirm the truth of his accusations against Quakers, Keach included his quotations from George Fox on this topic. He recorded that Fox "*saith in his book called the great Mystery, &c.* pag. 206. *if there be any other Christ, but he that was crucified within, he is a false Christ, and* pag.207. *that Gods Christ is not distinct from the Saints.*" Each of these excerpts displays an apparent rejection of the orthodoxy position "That Christ a man abides forevermore/A person distinct without us, as before." That Keach's Professor maintained and defended that fundamental point of belief, "As by true Protestants always confessed."[128]

Quaker heterodoxy on the fact of Christ's natural body, in contrast to all "true Protestants," is a point that Keach gives further significance in terms of how important Christ's body was to the justification of sinners. Keach writes that it is of central importance, "To prove Christ Jesus Crucifi'd and slain," because "'twas the way along which God did please/For to find out his wrath for to appease." It was of crucial

[127] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 220-1.
[128] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 246.

importance to remember the stakes when the Quakers denied Christ died on the cross, because "Without the Sacrifice of th' blessed Cross/There no Redemption nor Salvation was."[129] In contrast, while the Quaker admits that Christ's crucifixion was not without meaning, he denies that the crucifixion has anything to do with justification. He says of Christ that "He in his Life, and sufferings on the Cross/A lively Pattern and Example was," and that the chief benefit of the crucifixion was that it was the action "By which Christ did abolish and cashier/The types and shadows which against us were/Those Legal Rites and Ceremonies all."[130] Keach included a quotation from Whitehead's *Christian Quaker* for good measure, but while his Quaker sees the issue in terms of formalism, Keach shaped these views of Christology and soteriology into a definitive accusation about the Quakers' true allegiance.

In what represents perhaps the high point of *The Grand Impostor*'s invective, Keach connected his opponents explicitly to the errors of Antichristian Rome. While the Professor's Christ is described as acting as a creditor forgiving a debt, one external to the sinner who saves him, the Quakers seem to think that the sacrifice pleasing to God, "Is humility and meekness in the heart." On this basis, "[their] Christ it seems is but a quality/And outward being or existency/'Tis very clear you do not judge he hath."[131] This view of Christ sees him not as an external person whose sacrifice brings merit on behalf of sinners (which view of justification Penn explicitly rejected, as recorded above), but as a characteristic within man. If that view is taken to its conclusion, Keach supposed that merit must come from man himself, with which opinion "Pope and Socinians" would

[129] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 248.
[130] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 249, 250.
[131] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 255.

agree. The beliefs of the Quakers, then, are but dressed up Popery or, as the Baptist put it "a new Cloak for the Old Whore."[132]

There is a good deal of similarity between Keach's depiction of Quakers as papists in disguise and the sort of rhetoric that conformists used against the Baptists. Stated differently, Keach's "Popery in a new Dress" was quite like the "Popery in Masquerade" of Roger L'Estrange. *The Committee* depicted the pope as the mastermind beyond seditious dissent poised to overthrow church and state,[133] and Keach saw the affiliation between Quakers and Papists as part of "Some Jusuitical [sic] crafty design/Gods Truth in *England* thus to undermine."[134] While the Baptist writer presented the connection as being demonstrated through specific similarities, and L'Estrange, like Thomas Edwards, showed the connection manifested in the proliferation of various errors, both perspectives had English Protestantism threatened by the forces of heresy on both sides.

Keach's poem allied the Quakers with Rome in their rejection of scripture's authority and their denial of the benefit of Christ's crucifixion. These essential points of Protestant orthodoxy are further presented as being held by Baptists, who are defended by an unaffiliated interlocutor.[135] Keach thus expressed his understanding of the Baptists' place within the spectrum of nonconformity, much as did Baptist apologia of the 1660s and the Second London Confession of 1677. Baptists stood alongside other Protestants of a conventional, orthodox sort, in all important matters. Their shared orthodoxy was

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[132] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 256-7.
[133] Roger L'Estrange, *The Committee, or, Popery in Masquerade* (London: 1680). See also the discussion of L'Estrange and Thomas Edwards in Chapter 1.
[134] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 257. The passage continues on the issue of salvation by works, "Papists by their good works and sanctity/Think they do merit Heaven, and say we/You Doctrine doth hold forth but little less."
[135] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 295, 290, 277, 278. See above.

threatened, on the one hand, by excessive formalism and institutional innovation of popery, and on the other hand by the radical anti-scriptural enthusiasm of the Quakers. This position was not merely something to be publicized through joint statements of the Baptists and in Keach's own writing for the benefit of those outside of their communion, but it was reflected in their own sense of orthodoxy within their congregations.

The division between Baptists and Quakers would continue to be important to the self-definition and preservation of orthodoxy amongst Baptists. Their opposition to Quaker errors was also a lens through which they viewed internal discussions of orthodoxy. Keach's 1684 allegory *Progress of Sin* included a Quaker defending Sin itself. Hat on head, the Quaker interrupts the trial of Sin and demeans the judge Sacred Scripture as a "*Lifeless Figure*," saying that the proper judge of religion is "The *Light* within all Men." When he calls Sacred Scripture "a pitiful *Paper-Judge*, a *Dead Letter*," a Jesuit chimes in and agrees that "*Scripture* only depends upon the Authority of the *Church*."[136] *Progress of Sin* is a veritable catalogue of sins and religious errors, probably based in part at least on John Bunyan's *Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, but it included no other references to the light within or Quakers, and was nine years removed from the 1674 disputes and Keach's response to them. Nonetheless, it seems that the kinship between Popery and Quakerism remained in Keach's mind to the extent that he thought it appropriate to include them in the final chapters of his allegory.

The Quakers' role as the *bête noire* of the Baptists would also be reflected in Keach's publications of the 1690s. Preaching to his congregation about justification in sermons that would later be published, he used the Quakers as an example of the errors

[136] Benjamin Keach, *The Progress of Sin; or the Travels of Ungodliness: Wherein, the Pedigree, Rise (or Original) Antiquity, Subtility, Evil Nature, and prevailing Power, of SIN, is fully Discovered* (London: Printed for John Dunton, 1684), 245, 246.

with which England was beset, often in an offhanded manner, but always in the clearest possible terms.[137] But the most striking of Keach's late-career discussions of Quakers came when he found himself at the centre of a debate internal to Particular Baptists. The issue at stake was that of hymn-singing in Baptist churches, and Keach was the principal participant in this debate. His promotion of singing at his Horsley-Down church brought him under fire in 1690, and his main opponent, Isaac Marlow, attacked him for encouraging carnal human forms rather than spiritual worship. In turn, Keach accused Marlow of rejecting scriptural ordinances in such a way as to invite the errors of Quakerism. The issue of singing will receive a fuller treatment in Chapter 4, but a truncated account of the dispute will suffice here.

Marlow's criticism and Keach's response were largely based on their conflicting definitions of spiritual and carnal singing. In Marlow's estimation, the essence of spiritual singing consisted of two parts, "Matter from the Word, and Melody by the Spirit." In particular he objected to the carnal nature of hymns that were composed by men (such as those of Keach) because such songs "proceed not from within us, out of a Fulness and Enrichings of the Word and Spirit," and as such are inappropriate. He added that Christians should not have faith in "the formal and carnal Ordinances of the Law, and

[137] Benjamin Keach, *Christ Alone the way to Heaven: or, Jacob's Ladder Improved. Containing Four Sermons, Lately Preach'd on Genesis. XXVIII. XII. Wherein the Doctrine of Free-Grace is display'd, through Jesus Christ* (London: Printed and Sold by Benjamin Harris, 1698), 27; Benjamin Keach, *The Display of Glorious Grace: Or, the Covenant of Peace, opened in Fourteen Sermons Lately Preached, In which the Errors of the present Day, about Reconciliation and Justification, are Detected* (London: Printed for S. Bridge, sold by Mary Fabian, Joseph Collier, and William Marshall, 1698), 129; Benjamin Keach, *The Counterfeit Christian; Or, the Danger of Hypocrisy: Opened in Two Sermons. Containing an Exposition of that Parabolic Speech of our Blessed Saviour, Matth. Xii. 43, 44, 45. When the Unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, &c.* (London: Printed and sold by John Pike, 1691), 56; Benjamin Keach, *The Marrow of True Justification, or, Justification without Works: Containing the Substance of Two Sermons lately preached on Rom. 4.5. And by the Importunity of some gracious Christians, now published with some additions* (London: Printed for Dorman Newman at the King's Arm in Poultrey, 1692), 25.

much less in the humane precomposed forms of Men."[138] In reading Marlow's arguments, Keach was no doubt reminded of the Quakers' criticisms of ordinances. He said as much, calling Marlow "little better…than a mere *Enthusiast*," and upbraided him by saying that "whilst you plead for Spiritual Worship, and cry down all Forms, you seem to overthrow all external Acts of Religion."[139]

Keach saw in Marlow the spectre of a Quaker. His criticism of scriptural ordinances could easily lead to true folly. Keach noted that preaching was every bit as spiritual as singing, and so the criticism of pre-composed forms may as well be said "to justify the Quakers Silent Meetings," where no sermon was given but that which was inspired by the light within. He continued to say that, "by this way of reasoning, there is no more need of the poor Body to glorify God in his Worship," hostile to all ordinances whatsoever.[140] More than a rhetorical slippery slope, Marlow's argument could have a real threat to church discipline as well. To demand "the immediate and extraordinary help of the Spirit in the discharge of them," Keach wrote, opened the door to "*Quakerism*, and throw[s] Stumbling blocks before the weak."[141] Radical anti-formalism and rejection of the scriptures would act in such a way as, "Gods Truth in *England* thus to undermine," as Keach's own Professor had put it in 1675.[142] In fact, the Horselydown church itself was not immune to these threats and we read that one of the church's members, having denied singing as a practice, "sometime after turned *Quaker*, and to my Face denied the Resurrection of his Body, &c."[143]

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[138] Isaac Marlow, *A Brief Discourse Concerning Singing in the Publick Worship of GOD in the Gospel-Church* (London: Printed for the author, 1690), 16, 17.
[139] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 123-124.
[140] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 14.
[141] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 137.
[142] Keach, *Grand Impostor*, 257.
[143] Keach, *An Answer to Mr. Marlow's Appendix*, 12.

Conclusion

The distinction between himself and a Quaker was no less important to Keach and Baptists like him, than that between a Protestant and a Roman Catholic. Indeed, as seen in Keach's willingness to rank the Quakers with that most fundamentally disordered of societies, the Jesuits, many Baptists regarded the Friends as beyond the pale of Christianity in a way that the Church of England was not. As is demonstrated by the Baptists' own apologia and confessions of faith, it was useful for them to emphasize their basic agreement with other English Protestants, and to create distance between themselves and less acceptable nonconformists such as the Quakers. The risks that came with being too readily associated with Quakers and Fifth Monarchists would have come readily to the mind of Baptists like Keach, Hanserd Knollys, and William Kiffin. Their personal experience confirmed that this sort of association had put members of the London congregations in danger of physical harm, and had placed all three at the mercy of the court themselves.

Rather than necessarily thinking of themselves as nonconformists, these Particular Baptists presented themselves as Protestants of a broadly orthodox sort, and were the first in line to attack the heterodoxy of those other products of mid-century dissent. This observation somewhat complicates the use of the term "Nonconformity" which tends to imply a broader constellation of shared values, generally speaking, and identification than might be sustained with a proper understanding of the fault lines between different sorts of nonconformists. The basic binary of conformity and nonconformity is sometimes inadequate to the proper understanding of confessional affiliation in the hurly-burly of Restoration religious culture. In spite of those attitudes that Quakers and Baptists shared

in terms of church governance, sacraments, and some other formal matters, their constant debates were occasioned by the more fundamental disagreements they perceived themselves to have.

Furthermore, the disagreements between the two groups, particularly from 1672-74, became explicitly a communal, public affair to which each group tied its reputation. In this context, the identity of nonconformist or dissenter held no real appeal for the Baptists, and in their conflict with the Quakers the only "dissent" worth speaking of was the Quakers' dissent from the truth. This is not to suggest, however, that Baptists thought of themselves purely as "Protestants" of a general type. Their distinctive confessional identity did rear its head. In their defence of those beliefs particular to their denomination, and their presentation of their own origins and history, the specificity of Baptists as Baptists would play a much larger role.

Chapter 3: Sin, Popery, and the Antichrist, 1675-1689

In 1675, the same year that Keach wrote *The Grand Imposter Discovered*, he wrote a verse allegory about Youth being tempted by sin and redeemed by Conscience, Truth, and Grace, called *War with the Devil*. This was the first of a series of allegorical and moral works, some in verse and some in prose, in which Keach dealt with questions of sin, temptation, and the devil's work on Earth. Subsequent books in this vein included *The Glorious Lover* (1676), *The Travels of True Godliness* (1684), and *The Progress of Sin* (1684). Two other poems, *Sion in Distress* (1681) and *Distressed Sion Relieved* (1689), concerned themselves with eschatological matters, as Keach warned his readers about the imminent threats of the Antichrist and claimed that Christ's deliverance was near at hand. In all of these works, Keach's interest was in drawing a clear line between the godly on the one hand, and the sinfulness of the world on the other hand. His conceptions of persecution and martyrdom, and his eschatological understanding of events, went hand in hand in these works.

As a nonconformist in Restoration England, Keach was confronted every day by a world not in accordance with his moral and religious principles. As a poet and a polemicist, he engaged with the issues of his day, and we have already discussed such matters as his opposition to Quakers, his defence of Believer's Baptism, and his advocacy for religious toleration. His allegorical and eschatological writing continued this work, but instead of dealing with specific complaints against religious opponents, these publications attempted to distil the experience of Christian living into a more straightforward narrative. Like John Bunyan, whose *Pilgrim's Progress* told the tale of a Christian's journey through all temptations and hardships of a sinful world to arrive at his

destination, the Celestial City, Keach depicted the godly as being a persecuted minority faced with obstacles at every turn.

Keach made sense of Baptists' struggles through a grand narrative on the one hand, and applied these basic principles to day-to-day life on the other. In the eschatological scheme of things, he depicted the forces of Christ and Protestantism arrayed on one side of a worldwide conflict, with those of sin and the Roman Catholic Antichrist opposing them at every turn. During the 1680s, and culminating in the Glorious Revolution in 1688, Keach saw the Antichrist's hand in the persecution of Protestants at home and abroad, and awaited Christ's intervention to destroy the papacy's earthly power. But while the temporal power embodied in murderous popish plots and foreign kings was one aspect of devilish forces attacking Protestants, the same conflict took place in more mundane contexts. Keach regarded carnal and sensual pleasures that appealed to base human appetites as a particular danger.

While he located the worst such excesses in the Whore of Babylon and the Roman Catholic Church, everyday temptations including food, art, music, and poetry were also implicated in the devil's work. This position, however, placed Keach in an awkward situation: he was decrying the danger posed by pleasurable works like poetry and songs while he himself wrote poetry and songs. In spite of such an apparent contradiction, however, Keach managed to remain consistent in expressing the dangers of the sensual while pursuing spiritual ends through sensual works of his own. The poetry and prose works that he produced between 1675 and 1689 were intended to be entertaining and appeal to the readers' love of rhyme and sensual imagery. At the same time, they attacked sensual, carnal, and sinful antagonists who ranged from the mundane to the apocalyptic.

Moral Works: The Spirit and the Flesh

Keach was far from being the only nonconformist in the Restoration who saw cause for concern as to the moral and spiritual state of English society during the reign of Charles II. The public immorality of the court, and of the King himself, including Charles's well known sexual liaisons, was denounced from various quarters in sermons and print. The Quaker Charles Bayley denounced the King for "making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts therein," while the Presbyterian Thomas Doolittle anticipated God's wrath on England for such "Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, [and] Lasciviousness."[1] As a writer, and as someone concerned with the written word, Keach was likely well aware of the worldly subject matter often featuring in the poems and plays of such fixtures of Restoration literature as John Wilmot, the second Earl of Rochester, George Etherege, and Aphra Behn. As some of England's most noted dramatists boasted that the King was "the sauciest one that e'er did swive" or commented that "Love's chiefest magic lies/In women's cunts not in their eyes," it comes perhaps as no surprise that Keach would see something amiss on the Restoration stage.[2] Thus, in *The Progress of Sin* he depicted an agent of Sin, appropriately named Madam Wanton, as leading children to damnation by advising them "to read Love *Romances*, and frequent *Play-houses.*"[3]

It was not only the content of poetry and plays that was worrisome for Keach, however. He spent a good deal of time concerning himself with the matter of "Carnal

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[1] Tim Harris, "'There is None that Loves Him but Drunk Whores and Whoremongers': Popular Criticisms of the Restoration Court," in *Politics, Transgression, and Representation at the Court of Charles II*, ed. Julia Marciari Alexander and Catharine MacLeod (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 44-45.
[2] Harris, "There is None That Loves Him but Drunk Whores and Whoremongers," 43. George Etherege, "So soft and Amorously You Write," in *The Poems of Sir George Etherege*, ed. James Thorpe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 43.
[3] Benjamin Keach, *The Progress of Sin; or the Travels of Ungodliness: Wherein, the Pedigree, Rise (or Original) Antiquity, Subtility, Evil Nature, and prevailing Power, of SIN, is fully Discovered* (London: Printed for John Dunton, 1684), 86.

Forms" themselves, including plays and romances, and at least certain kinds of music. While the term was one that he would later use in his debates over hymn-singing in the 1690s, it applies to this earlier period in the 1670s and 1680s as well.[4] Though superficially a matter of little importance, the question of whether "forms" such as poetry and music were somehow tainted on account of their sensual appeal was something of an enduring concern for him. Explicit in Keach's literary output was the threat of romance, drama, and music taking Christians' attention away from spirituality, and tempting them to sin.

Moreover, Keach's verse and allegorical works at times depicted various artistic forms as inherently carnal. In his allegory *Travels of True Godliness*, he had the character "Self-Love" divert a rich sinner from "Godliness" (the protagonist) by encouraging him to go to a playhouse and "to read *Romances* and Song Books."[5] He likewise attributed such strategies to the forces of evil in *The Progress of Sin*, where a devilish school teaches "The Art of *Mirth, Musick,* and all kind of *Flesh-ravishing Melodies*…filthy *Songs* and abominable *Romances*," and the devil Apollyon takes credit for creating playbooks as a tool for temptation.[6] This last statement is significant because it is not, for instance, bad or immoral plays that Apollyon created, but all playbooks as a form. If these are "Carnal Forms" it is because they appeal to sensual pleasure as a distraction from spiritual concerns.

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[4] Benjamin Keach, *An Answer to Mr. Marlow's Appendix* (London: Printed for the Author, 1691), 13. The following sections from page 110 to 124, are drawn from my previously published chapter, Justin Irwin, "'Sweet mirth and Musick rare': Sensual spirituality in the work of Benjamin Keach," in *Mediating Religious Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Torrance Kirby and Matthew Milner (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 191-219. The contents have been edited for the current work, but much of the detail remains the same.

[5] Benjamin Keach, *The Travels of True Godliness, from the Beginnings of the World to this present Day, in an apt and Pleasant Allegory*, (London: Printed for John Dunton, 1684), 25-26, 27.

[6] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 147-150, 22.

Moral issues attached to the pleasures of the world are, of course, long established concerns for Christians. As befits such a topic, Keach's allegories had a timeless quality inasmuch as they purported to represent the human experience divorced from any particular place and time. This having been said, he still wrote in a particular historical context, and his repeated references to plays and playbooks suggest that he had contemporary concerns in mind. Keach connected Sin (both the allegorical character and the real life concept) through the carnality of these genres to the contemporary culture of the Restoration. His characterization of such forms may be seen as a riposte to dominant royalist literature and drama, the wittiness and form of which provided what Steven Zwicker terms "a vision of innocent hierarchy."[7] In tainting playhouses and romance with ready association to the machinations of Satan, Keach labelled many popular works of his day as carnal forms. But while sneering references to plays allowed Keach to create a clear distinction between his art and that of the ungodly, the division is less clear in his criticism of musical forms.

Keach's work expressed a concern with the threat posed by music, and this threat is fundamentally rooted in sensuality. In *The Progress of Sin* he represented the allegorical City of Sensuality as a stronghold of Sin, with its gate divided into five sections representing the senses. While sexual pleasures are available through sight, touch and smell, the same is true of hearing, which section of the gate is filled "with all sorts of Rare, and Flesh-ravishing Musick; that makes such a melodious Sound, that the *Ear* is engaged presently."[8] Music, like poetry and plays, was a moral danger specifically because its form was one that appealed to the senses. Keach wrote, for instance, that Sin

[7] Steven Zwicker, *Lines of Authority: Politics and English Literary Culture, 1649-1689* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 30.
[8] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 140-141.

succeeded "by his alluring the hearts of Men and Women with *Musical Instruments*…and *Sensual Delights*."[9] The identification of sin's music as "flesh ravishing," so transparently erotic, expressed the full scope of the form's potential carnality. This is a term that Keach used throughout his allegory, and its sexual dimension is also reflected in the promise of Sin's song to "*Ravish each* Sense."[10]

Keach also associated music with temptation by depicting allegorical characters using song for evil ends. Read for instance the song his Sin and Apollyon use to corrupt youths. The characters sing, "*Come, come,* brave Gallants, *here's a Song that will*/*Ravish each* Sense; *your* Souls *with Laughter fill*," and promise carnal pleasures "*If thou but once dost hear this* Melody/*And give thy Heart to me and Grace defie*."[11] Likewise, after depicting the near victory of True Godliness in prose, Keach wrote the speech of Apollyon as verse. Thus it was through trite couplets that the Hell's forces were rallied: "*Shall* Godliness*, that cursed foe of ours/Prevail against all Hells infernal Pow'rs?/I swear in spight of Heaven it shall not be—/And presently he rose from off his Seat.*"[12]

An ideal example of Keach's approach to the hazards of the flesh is his verse dialogue *War with the Devil or, the Young man's conflict with the powers of darkness*, which was originally published in 1675 and was probably Keach's most popular work. The printer John Dunton was impressed by Keach's ability to "[understand] the humour and necessity of his audience" and claimed (with some exaggeration) that *War with the Devil* would, along with *Travels of True Godliness*, "sell to the end of time."[13] In actuality, the work was published in several subsequent editions throughout the

[9] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 38.
[10] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 108-109.
[11] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 108-109.
[12] Keach, *True Godliness*, 131.
[13] John Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton* (London: J. Nichols, Son, and Bentley, 1818), 177.

eighteenth century, with new publications as late as 1776 and 1795, and the title pages of Keach's other books sometimes identified him as "the author of War with the Devil," in an apparent attempt to capitalize on the work's relative popularity.[14]

War with the Devil betrays very little about Keach's particular confessional allegiance, providing instead a morality tale that would be unobjectionable to Protestants regardless of their specific denominations. In this poem, he set out to dissuade the reader from the sensual benefits in which youth delights. The poem itself is largely a dialogue between the characters Youth and Conscience, with other characters such as Truth and Grace also playing a role.[15] Youth enjoys the pleasures of spring, flowers, gambling, and women, before being accosted by Conscience. Even while Conscience berates him for having "violate[d] that Rule which God doth give," the Youth prefers to "rise up, and…be gone/To the brave Boys, who toss the Pot about," distracting himself from conscience with constant action.[16] The Devil is also in evidence, promising pleasure, honour, and wealth, and encouraging "Mistris Heart, stir up your wilful Will/Is this a season for him to sit still?" The Youth's Old Companions likewise encourage him to take solace in good times and entertainment, saying "Shall thy Heroick Spirit thus give

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[14] Benjamin Keach, *War with the Devil or, the Young man's conflict with the powers of darkness,* 22nd Edition [as per the title page] (London: Printed for W. Johnston, 1776); Keach, *War with the Devil,* (Leeds: Printed for John Binns, 1795). These are the two latest editions available on Eighteenth Century Collections Online, though it is possible there are later editions of the work not contained in the database. The other works that identified Keach as "Author of War with the Devil" include *The Glorious Lover*, *Travels of True Godliness*, *The Progress of Sin*, and Benjamin Keach, *A Feast of Fat Things Full of Marrow. Containing several Scripture Songs taken out of the Old and New Testament. With others, composed by the Author* (London: Printed by Benjamin Harris, 1696).

[15] When referring to the characters in Keach's poem, Conscience, Truth, Youth etc. are capitalized.

[16] Keach, *War with the Devil or, The Young man's conflict with the powers of darkness In a dialogue* (London: Printed and sold by Benjamin Harris, 1675), 5-10, 11. All subsequent citations to *War With the Devil* are taken from the 1675 edition.

place/To silly dotage," characterizing any surrender to Conscience as unbefitting a young man in the prime of life.[17]

While Keach began by giving a voice to the sensual pleasures of worldly youth, this allowed him to respond to it with the restraint of Conscience and a recurring emphasis on *memento mori*, such as, "My former days I did compare/Unto the sweet and lovely Spring...But I was blind, I now do see." Keach complimented this emphasis on the fragility of life by including the converted Youth's sayings, "My life a bubble and a Vapor is," and "The flower.../Soon may if fade and wither quite away."[18] He depicted Youth returning to Conscience through "thoughts of death" upon which he provided a sermon from Truth on the brevity and uncertainty of life: "'tis but a blast/Thy Sand is little, long it will not last."[19] Truth consistently provides reminders of the vainglory of life, asking rhetorically "Where's Nimrod now, that mighty Man of old/And where's the Glory of the Head of Gold." Keach likewise cited the example of Alexander, and had Truth declare that "This World's not big enough Man's Soul to fill."[20] Only through Grace, in addition to Conscience and Truth, could the Youth be saved, and upon his final conversion, Keach wrote, "*What man would not all earthly glory slight/For one small dram, or taste of such delight*…Ah happy I, I live! my Soul's involv'd/In secret raptures, sighs to be dissolv'd."[21] The pleasures of the spirit, ultimately, far outweighed those of the flesh.

[17] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 34-35, 41.
[18] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 121, 116-128, 189.
[19] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 41, 45.
[20] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 27.
[21] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 93.

Sensuality and Spirituality

As mentioned above, Keach's apparent disdain for artistic forms that played upon the sensual appeals of sight, sound, and touch would seem to have placed him in an awkward position when it came to his own poetry and hymn-writing. Nonetheless he sought to draw a clear line between his own artistic offerings and those of more worldly artists. In the preface to *War with the Devil*, Keach's anonymous friend compared the poem to others, which "Strive to affect the Fancy, not the Heart," and described Keach's more wholesome work as being intended "to instruct that precious Soul of thine/How thou in Christ an Int'rest may'st obtain." Rather than providing a distraction from spiritual concerns, as did the devil's playground of romances, songs, and plays he depicted in works like *Progress of Sin*, Keach's own poetry would "with honest craft beguile," and aid in the readers' spiritual development.[22] Nonetheless, the use of poetry, song, and romantic genres took some justification.

Keach's near contemporary, John Bunyan, also saw that he needed to justify his fanciful writings. His preface to *Pilgrim's Progress* included a poem as an apology for the book. In this poem, Bunyan acknowledged that some would have misgivings about his style of writing, but compared his method to dark clouds that bring water, the fisherman's various means of "Snares, Lines, Angles, Hooks and Nets," the manner in which "the Fowler seek[s] to catch his Game/By divers means, all which one cannot name."[23] Keach took a similar tact. He was sure to remind his readers that King David and Solomon were both poets, and that, while some considered poetry profane, "Verse hath express'd as sacred things as Prose/Though some there be, that Poetry abuse/Must

[22] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 1, 2.
[23] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that which is to come* (London: Printed for Nathaniel Ponder, 1678), A4.

we therefore, not the same method use?"[24] Both men contended that, though some may have regarded their method as suspect, the good results that could come of it justified their efforts.

So, Keach did not merely engage in special pleading against his own rules. Instead, he maintained that not all poetry was carnal, but it could be turned to a higher purpose. Keach's works also justified themselves through recourse to a higher source of inspiration than other art. The muse is an oft-invoked image in poetry, and Keach's own inspiration was attributed to his having been "*heated with Seraphick Fire/Which did his late lamenting Muse inspire*," his "*clear discerning Soul*" moving him to express "*Natural sorrow.*"[25] In a poem upon the death of a fellow minister he asked that "Heaven assist my Pen, and help indite/This Mournful Elegy I'm mov'd to write."[26] Spiritual inspiration plays the role of the muse, and so seems to remain separate from the physical body of the writer and his art, but Keach expressed confidence that the spiritual could be powerfully expressed in external form. He described his muse as "*rais'd beyond a vulgar flight*" and wrote that, in contrast to those inspired by the classical muse, he was able to detail subjects that "*nor* Greece *nor* Rome *could ever yield*." Thus he implored God to "*Purge with thy Beams my over-clouded mind/Direct my* Pen, *my* Intellect *refine.*"[27] The image that Keach presented was that of a muddled, mortal artist, bound by things of the world, but permitted to express a purified spiritual message through God's grace. Keach's

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[24] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 4.
[25] Benjamin Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved, or, The Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness* (London: Printed for Nath. Crouch at the Bible in the Poultrey near Cheapside, 1689), Preface.
[26] Benjamin Keach, *An Elegy On the Death of that most Laborious and Painful Minister of the Gospel, Mr. John Norcot, Who fell asleep in the Lord the 24th of this instant, 1675/6* (London: Printed for Ben. Harris, the Stationers Arm in Sweetings Rents near the Royal Exchange, 1676).
[27] Benjamin Keach, *The Glorious Lover. A Divine Poem, Upon the Adorable Mystery of Sinners Redemption* (London: Printed for J.D. for Christopher Hussey, at the Flower-de-Luce in Little Britain, 1679), Preface.

inclusion of the Spirit as his muse in writing verse intended for print made the Spirit complicit in his deliberately crafted works. His own writings were thus sanctified.

The potent pedagogical potential of Keach's "honest craft" was also an important factor in his use of poetry in song. In *Spiritual Melody*, Keach suggested that, because children were inclined to enjoy verse, they would quickly memorize the hymns, learning the lessons that come with them through the sort of repetition that rhymes and melodies would readily facilitate.[28] Implicit in this statement was the argument that, because it was natural to find outward forms appealing, it was appropriate to make use of them for good ends. Certainly Keach defended his hymns in *A Breach Repaired in God's Worship* by suggesting that children singing was a natural development in childhood, and in order to ensure they did not sing "vain Songs" parents should "instruct their Children about what they should sing, and what not, that so Art and Nature too…may be improved to the Honour of God."[29] The inherent appeal of the sensory in order to affect spirituality is in no way limited to children, and Keach would make use of it in other works as well.

"Youths," primarily young men, but also young women, were another target audience. Keach represented youth as a period rife with sensual dangers, and *Progress of Sin* specifically included an allegorical school of sin in a country called "Non-Age."[30] To address the carnal temptations of youth, he aimed *War with the Devil* at those "who had rather chose/To read ten lines in Verse, than one in Prose." In order to more effectively proselytize, he intended for verse to play on "those curious fancies," which "'twill secretly betray/Them to their Conscience."[31] Likewise, the preface to *The Glorious Lover*

[28] Keach, *Spiritual Melody*, A3-A4.
[29] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 184.
[30] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 85-89, 147-149.
[31] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 2, 3.

addresses readers who "Amorous Stories *gladly hear*," telling them "*Those* treacherous Delights *a while lay by/And lend attention to our* History."[32] In each case, Keach warned of the dangers of secular fancies, even while making use of their amorous forms and imagery to appeal to the spiritual. Keach's tactic here was on the one hand to give credence to the pleasures of the flesh by giving them voice, and on the other to use the same attractive verse to convince the reader that Babylon, "hides destruction with a fained Kiss."[33] But this disavowal of the fleshly pleasures, managed through the very "curious fancies" that take such a pleasure in art, was only one of Keach's methods. More indicative of his union of spirituality and sensual forms was his presentation of the alternative to the world of the flesh: a depiction of the Spiritual that seems to draw quite heavily on fleshly images.

Most of Keach's verse and prose makes effective use of sensual and erotic imagery. In no way uncomfortable with stirring up his audience's physical desires, two of his favourite images were those of Christ as the Bridegroom and the "beloved" lover. While he had presented *The Glorious Lover* as an alternative to "amorous stories," and his prose warns that romances were a form of literature that led to sin, the work itself is unavoidably a romance. While Christ is cast as the lover, a splendid prince, the object of his affection is the human soul. The soul begins the poem as a beautiful virgin, "Fair as the Lilly, e're rude hands have toucht it/Or snow unfal'n, before the Earth hath smucht it," but becomes soiled by sin, "From Top to Toe all over…tainted" to the extent that "The Splendid Beauty of the whole Creation/Is thus become a meer Abomination."[34] The narrative of this spiritual romance sees Christ playing the faithful, almost desperate suitor

[32] Keach, *Glorious Lover*, preface.
[33] Keach, *Glorious Lover*, 151.
[34] Keach, *Glorious Lover*, 6, 76.

who continues through all adversity to pursue his match. He pleads, "Ah! How my Soul with a tempestuous tide/Of tears is overwhelm'd, whilst I'm deny'd/My Suit to thee! My passions overflow/To see thee flight me, and my passion too."[35] Having adopted the model of the romance with Christ and the Soul as lovers, Keach led his reader to the emotional conclusion. The wedding of Christ and Soul is lauded, "*With Men on Earth your joys divide*/*Earth ne'r produc'd so fair a Bride/Nor Heaven a Bridegroom*," and the Soul's joy is given voice with the concluding verses: "*For He it is, and He alone*/*Hath made me his Beloved one.*"[36]

These images of Bridegroom and Beloved draw upon biblical images from the gospels and psalms, as well as, crucially, the Song of Solomon. In *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England*, Sharon Achinstein notes the popularity of the Song of Solomon in particular among nonconformists, and discusses the prominent place of this sensually appealing biblical text in some nonconformist literature.[37] While Keach's work gives little indication of whether or not he had read many of these contemporary works, it is in drawing upon this shared imagery that he made obvious the sensual, even erotic sense of his spirituality. Images of a wedding feast, sweet perfumes and incense, rich and luxurious robes and jewellery, are all presented in Keach's hymns and poems as gifts of God to the Saints. Keach also asserted the physical beauty of Christ's body at various points in his written works. For instance, he gave physical descriptions of Godliness, stating that "every line and lineament, Veins, Nerves, and Sinews of him are in such an exact and admirable order placed" or Christ as "*a Person of Celestial Race/Lovely his*

[35] Keach, *Glorious Lover*, 159.
[36] Keach, *Glorious Lover*, 264, 266.
[37] Sharon Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 191-199. Achinstein notes Keach's own use of this imagery, along with certain of his contemporaries.

Shape, ineffable his Face."[38] Conversely, Keach imagined the soul as being covered with sores and foul infections (sin), and presented God as the only physician able to purify and restore its virginal quality.[39]

While the spiritual was given a real physicality in Keach's work, particularly sexualized was his depiction of the soul being ravished. When it is "ravished" the soul is alternatively corrupted and soiled by sin, or purified and saved by Christ. While Keach wrote of carnal music as "Flesh Ravishing," he also depicted Apollyon conceiving Sin by a "beautiful and undefiled Virgin, whom…he cunningly enticed to his foul and unclean Embraces," and the "Mrs Soul" testifying against Sin describes herself as having been "pure, holy, and chaste" before "the *Prisoner at the Bar*…in a shameful manner defil'd me…I was poisoned by him."[40] Certainly, the carnal and sexual had a capacity to defile, but the purification of the soul was likewise something Keach presented in sexual terms. He did this by describing the Kingdom of Heaven as so pleasing its inhabitants that "It raises Joy unto a Ravishment," and stating that saints would "ravish'd be eternally/With his transcendant Love."[41] Furthermore, his hymns make it clear that experiencing Christ's love involves something much like a sexual component, saying "Let's look, and love, and wonder still/Till we are ravished," and calling Christians to "lean upon his dearest Breast/Till ravished with Love." The hymns also described salvation with verses like, "Ravish'd with thy Sacred Love/let us to Glory raise," and other such references.[42] This ravishing by Christ seemed to have a purifying effect, and Keach depicted Zion saying

[38] Keach, *True Godliness*, 5; *Progress of Sin*, 54.
[39] Keach, *Glorious Lover*, 254; *Progress of Sin*, 139.
[40] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 4, 257.
[41] Keach, *Glorious Lover*, 8-9; *Spiritual Melody*, 339.
[42] Keach, *Spiritual Melody*, 120, 366; Keach, *Feast of Fat Things*, 60.

joyfully at the final judgement, "By thee I ravish'd am."[43] The consequence of this sensual, sexual representation of spiritual life is that, while the Youth of *War With the Devil* is instructed to reject the carnal, sensual pleasures of the flesh, he is also promised the opportunity to join those "Who with Eternal Love shall ravish'd be/Reigning with Christ to all Eternity."[44] Spirituality is, in this sense, represented as the superior form of sensuality.

Keach's evocative use of sensuality, to the point of being overtly sexual, as well as his advocacy of sweet melodies to appeal to the senses of worshippers, is better understood with reference to the quotations he included in his defence of hymns. He quoted a passage of Augustine saying that the Holy Spirit, "*hath mixed the power of his Doctrine with sweet Singing, that whilst the Soul was melted with the sweetness of the Verse, the Divine Word might the better be grafted with profit.*"[45] This quotation gives a good characterization of his sense of the sensual spirituality of the hymn. Perhaps more obviously seductive is his other quotation from Augustine: "the Voices flew into mine Ears, and thy Truth melted into mine Heart, and from thence flew forth the Effects of Godliness; the Tears ran down mine Eyes, and it was well with me when I was with them."[46] In including these quotations prominently in his work, Keach justified through a rhetorical appeal to antiquity his confidence in sensuality's effect on the spirit.

The proselytizing effect of sensual forms, indeed the intended effect of Keach's own work, was perhaps best illustrated in his own allegory. *Travels of True Godliness*, representative of and intended to bring about conversions, sees a conclusion wherein the

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[43] Keach, *Feast of Fat Things*, 62; *Zion in Distress*, 21.
[44] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 73.
[45] Keach, *Spiritual Melody*, A4.
[46] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 192.

allegorical vices are routed. Rather than being struck down with the rest of his company, the character Carnal Affections "were made heavenly."[47] This transformation was essential to the purpose of Keach's art. He was constantly aware of the ubiquity of artificial, sensual forms, as well as the dangers of arts seductive quality. Considering the risk of carnal art, his craft was aimed at appealing to the very carnal senses that might corrupt in order to turn human desire towards heaven. The artifice of the flesh was to be used in benefit of the spirit.

Achinstein identifies a sort of confrontation in the realm of Restoration poetics, wherein she suggests that nonconformists (including Baptists in particular) believed that the "[t]rue inspiration of the Holy Spirit can compete with the pagan muses," emphasizing an aesthetic which "precedes from strong, rapturous emotions" in contrast to the courtly wits and the age's other conformist pens.[48] This depiction is certainly accurate with respect to Keach's perception of his own spiritual inspiration. But at stake for the Baptist poet and hymn-writer was not merely a competition with less godly artists, but a statement with regards to the realm of sensuality itself. In claiming not only a facility with verse, but also a spiritual validity and indeed a scriptural ordinance for such forms, Keach staked a claim on artistic space for himself and his coreligionists. By claiming this space, Keach was also claiming a platform from which Baptists like himself could, and should, engage with English society and English Protestantism. Rather than separation from and rejection of the forms of the world, Keach told his fellows to embrace these

[47] Keach, *True Godliness*, 141.
[48] Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent*, 186-187.

forms, music foremost, because the rejection thereof, "[does] more obstruct the increase of our Churches than many are aware of."[49]

Keach's literary career may thus be seen to represent the perspective that, rather than retreat from the art and culture of the Restoration, where carnal forms and entertaining, bawdy works were so common, the Godly needed to meet the world form for form. If those media that appealed best to the senses could be made spiritual, and claimed as a place for the Godly, Keach could justify throwing his hat in the ring to combat carnal forms on their own terms. He did this in poetry, song, and polemic just as he did so from the pulpit, or for that matter the pillory in which he stood in 1664. While in the pillory he transformed the Conformists' tool of censure into a platform for criticism, his poetry and hymns allowed him to take the instruments of carnal writers in order to seduce and convert. The hymns and verses of Keach, seen in these terms, were one weapon the Baptists could use in fighting against the sinful world that persecuted them.

This conflict, moreover, was not a hopeless one. It was one in which a final victory could be anticipated, and where the final judgement of sin, and a just outcome for the faithful, was on its way. The eschatological framework that Keach had held to since the early 1660s was visible in these moral and allegorical works, particularly in their optimistic endings. In *Travels of True Godliness* Appolyon is chased away in the end, but *Progress of Sin* contained the more emphatic conclusion.[50] Here the character of Sin fails

[49] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, vii.
[50] Keach, *Travels of True Godliness*, 151.

in his assault against the city of Sion before being chased down by Divine Providence, put on trial, and sentenced to "die without Mercy."[51]

Anti-popery and Eschatology

This basic confrontation between Baptists' Protestantism and a hostile, carnal world was an urgent matter for Keach. The contest between the spirit and the flesh was not only a question of personal morality, but it was implicitly eschatological as well. More than an internal conflict, the "war with the devil" was tied to an external and apocalyptic battle. John Dunton's personal description of Keach provides some sense of the eschatological fervour the printer associated with him.

> [H]ere comes Mr. *Keach*, mounted upon some Apocalyptic Beast or other, with Babylon before him, and Zion behind him, and a hundred thousand Bulls and Bears, and furious Beasts of Prey, roaring, ramping, and bellowing at him, so hideously, that, unless some kind Angel drop from the clouds, and hacks and hews very plentifully among them, he must certainly be torn as small as a Love-letter.[52]

Eschatology and the Antichrist were a common theme in Keach's writings, and in the struggle between spirit and flesh, Christian and Anti-Christian, Keach saw the Roman Catholic Church as being the most dangerous foe.

In Keach's writings, Rome played the role of Babylon, and the papacy was the Antichrist. While Keach was overtly hostile to the errors of Quakers and other Protestants from time to time, he saw popery as being the ultimate architect of most of these errors. We have already seen that, in his writings against the Quakers, he denounced the Light Within as "Popery in a new dress" and he would later warn James Owen that his arguments for Paedobaptism would "countenance the Arguments of the Papists."[53]

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[51] Keach, *Progress of Sin*, 225, 242-271, 272.
[52] John Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton*, 177.
[53] Keach, *Grand Imposter*, 256-257; Keach, *Light Broke Forth in Wales*, 94.

Popery was both the root of error, and the final destination of any slippery slope that Keach might conjure up. It was a mortal danger on account of its carnal and seductive characteristics, and on account of its eschatological role.

The particularly sensual, carnal appeal of Popery is clear in the appendix to Keach's *War With the Devil*, which contained "a Dialogue between an old Apostate and young Professor." This account began with a narrative of the said apostate's conversion to Roman Catholicism. In the narrative, the Devil approaches a disillusioned young man who had lost his faith. He advises him of the advantages of feigned religion, and recommends the Church of Rome as fit for any atheist because its "Mellodious sounds, sweet mirth, and Musick rare/So much affect the heart and charm the ear," and goes on to describe various other worldly appeals offered by popery, including music, drink, sexual license, and the promise of easy absolution.[54] The same kinds of worldly appeals that the Youth of *War with the Devil* found attractive are the very characteristics of popery to which Keach attributes the Apostate's conversion.

This seductive characterization is also perfectly in line with the common association of the papacy with the biblical Whore of Babylon. The papacy was an easy mark for such eschatological interpretations on account of its apparent worldliness, its persecution of Protestants, and excessive formality of Roman Catholic ordinances. Keach's works were no exception in placing the papacy front and centre in the apocalypse. They present Rome in the guise of Babylon, as opposed to the Sion of Protestant England: ostentatious, prideful and, like a whore, enticing and corrupting

[54] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 129-132.

powerful men.[55] As befit the imagery of the whore of Babylon, Keach depicted Catholic temptations in terms of seduction and sexuality and rejected them like the kiss of a "Strumpet" after comparing Rome to a "Whore…deck'd with Gold, brave Stones and Pearl."[56] He likewise warned of "Romish Fragments" surviving in England, and called them "The Garb, the Painting, and the Gate of Whores."[57] He depicted the Whore of Babylon, Rome, as excessively gaudy and erotically seductive. In keeping with this representation, Keach understood the apparently external and sensually appealing practices of the Catholic Church to be crucial to the risk it poses to Christians

As shown by the fictional Apostate, who found music to be an appropriate accompaniment to antichristian religion, Keach believed music to be one of the excesses of Rome. The attraction of Roman Catholicism in his verse dialogue was that its sacramental and performative qualities appealed to the body rather than the spirit. In fact, Keach's Devil advocated conversion to Rome by denying God's existence, and in the place of religious truth he offered music, drink, and lax morals enabled by easy absolution.[58] The promise of drink may be an oblique reference to the sacrament of Communion, while the promised absolution is undoubtedly meant to come from Confession. The music that accompanies the Mass completed Keach's trio of carnal Roman ordinances, and its sensual appeal was among the diabolical temptations of Babylon.

Keach's substantial collection of "polemic against Roman Catholicism" is one area of his writing that Barry Vaughn's dissertation neglects, by the admission of the

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[55] Benjamin Keach, *Sion in Distress: or, the Groans of the Protestant Church* (London: Printed by George Larkin, for Enoch Prosser, 1681), 64; Keach, *True Godliness*, 72.
[56] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 151, 149.
[57] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 22.
[58] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 130-132.

author.[59] But Keach's writing on Rome was more than simply polemical. It was written at times with real anticipation. He produced a lengthy interpretation of the Book of Revelation in the wake of the Glorious Revolution, titled *Antichrist Stormed: Or, Mystery Babylon the great Whore, and great City, proved to be the present Church of Rome*. This book was the last of his eschatological works, which dated back to his earliest extant publication, *Zion in Distress*.[60] That 1666 poem likewise fit into a world-view in which godly Protestants faced off against a Roman Catholic Antichrist. But Keach's works were only one example of a set of writings, common in the seventeenth century, which concerned themselves with the papal antichrist.

Allusions to Rome's eschatological role as either Antichrist or the Whore of Babylon in seventeenth century England allow for no easy enumeration. The origins of the association of the papacy with Rome date back to the Reformation itself, though the most influential proponents of this view in England during the sixteenth century were probably John Foxe and John Bale. Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* and Bale's *The Image of Both Churches*, spelled out the centuries-long conflict between the true church and the false, Antichristian, Church of Rome for their readers.[61] According to Paul Christianson, Bale "saw a ubiquitous acceptance of his apocalyptic explanation of the Reformation by English protestants before he died," and various strains of Protestant thought made use of his basic framework in different ways. [62] Church of England commentators used the

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[59] James Barry Vaughn, "Public Worship and Practical Theology in the Work of Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)" (PhD diss., St. Andrews University, 1989), iii-iv.
[60] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, (London: 1666).
[61] John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments of these latter and perilous dayes, touching matters of the Church* (London: Printed for John Day, 1563); John Bale, *The image of both churches after the moste wonderfull and heavenly Revelation of Saint John the Evangelist, contayning a very frutefull exposition or paraphrase upon the same* (London: Printed by Richard Jugge, 1548).
[62] Paul Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon: English apocalyptic visions from the reformation to the eve of the civil war* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 9, 10, 244-245.

identification of Rome with the Babylon and the papacy with the Antichrist to justify their church's split from Roman Catholicism during the Reformation. Jacobean separatists, on the other hand, regarded the Church of England itself as a part of Babylon and that basic association, in Christianson's assessment, paved the way to the Puritan militancy of the Civil Wars. While parliamentarian John Pym "espied a popish plot to subvert the religion and government of England," the newly fêted martyr Henry Burton (pilloried in 1637 for his written attacks on Charles I) "fancied himself as one of the two witnesses of Revelation XI, killed by antichrist and resurrected after three and a half days."[63]

Christopher Hill's *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England* likewise identifies the papal Antichrist as a ubiquitous feature of English Protestantism before the Civil Wars. Both Hill and Christianson see the definition of Antichrist expanded to include Church of England bishops by the 1640s, and Hill quotes an account of Parliamentarian prisoners declaring that they "took up arms against Antichrist and popery" and that "the bishops were Antichrist, and all that did endeavour to support them."[64] In turning against English institutions, the Puritanical fury against Antichrist saw a turning point, and, before too long, "the attack is turned directly against the political and social aspects of this power," and some began to identify the King himself with the Beast.[65] The fear of the Antichrist, in short, was an essential component of the "world turned upside down" of the Civil Wars, and Interregnum.

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[63] Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon*, 180-181.
[64] Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 79-80. Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon*, 197.
[65] Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England*, 84-85, 104-105, 116-117.

In spite of the prominence of the Antichrist in the mid-century, however, Hill's account of events sees its diminishing in the Restoration. While the ready association between Rome and Babylon continued, and Hill admits several examples including Keach's *Antichrist Stormed*, on the whole his book would suggest that, "political uses of the myth of Antichrist virtually disappear."[66] Hill's claim that "Antichrist's name was less and less frequently mentioned" in the Restoration may be correct, but by no means had the concerns of eschatology been put to rest.[67] More recent scholarship from Warren Johnston, *Revelation Restored: The Apocalypse in Later Seventeenth Century England*, focuses on apocalyptic writings in the Restoration and gives a clear indication that nonconformists in particular had not lost interest in the prospect of war against the Roman Antichrist. Johnston argues that the characterization of the Church of Rome as Antichrist was "widely accepted," and that, for nonconformists, "the simplest accusation against the English authorities was to relate those authorities' methods to those of the papacy." He then provides dozens of examples of nonconformists, including Keach, doing just that from the 1660s until the Glorious Revolution.[68]

Some of the contemporaries of Keach that were involved in such eschatological preaching and writings include Hanserd Knollys and John Bunyan. Hill and Johnston each cite Knollys's *Exposition of the Whole of the Book of Revelation* as an example of writings on the Antichrist in the passages cited above.[69] His anticipation of deliverance from Antichrist was a long-standing belief as well. Barry Howson explains that Knollys

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[66] Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England*, 158.
[67] Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England*, 148.
[68] Warren Johnston, *Revelation Restored: The Apocalypse in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2011), 112, 112-124.
[69] Hanserd Knollys*, An exposition of the whole book of the Revelation wherein the visions and prophecies of Christ are opened and expounded* (London: William Marshall, 1689).

was writing about his apocalyptic anticipations in 1667, encouraged perhaps by his concern over the papal antichrist and the apparent lack of concern from the Church of England. At that time Knollys projected, rather significantly in hindsight, that the end would arrive in the year 1688.[70] He also preached at Allhallows the Great in the 1660, where other preachers anticipated the fall of Babylon, and urged the saints to "fight it out to the Last" with encouragement from the verses of Revelation and the Book of Daniel.[71] For his own part, Richard Greaves suggests that Knollys may have been one of the major influences (along with Joseph Mede) of John Bunyan's eschatological thinking, which pitted the King against Antichrist.[72]

Suffice it to say, then, that Keach's writings on the imminent dangers of Antichrist were hardly unique. The earliest of his eschatological works was *Zion in Distress*. From start to finish it was an anti-popish work, and Keach anticipated in his introductory address that "True Protestants will not offended be/'Tis onely Popish Imps will snarle at me."[73] The poem itself depicts Zion as the woman from Revelation 12, who has fled into the wilderness, pursued by the Beast and weeping "past all relief."[74] Keach set out to parallel the woman's plight with that of the true church being persecuted by the Antichrist. Zion praises the dedication of those who are punished for the sake of their faith, and who "in Prison rather chuse to lie/Then to obtain, by sin, their liberty," and are wiling to suffer exile "Before they will their Consciences defile." She also speculates that they would be better treated "If they were cast amongst the Turks or Jews" rather than in

[70] Barry Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions: The Question of Orthodoxy Regarding the Theology of Hanserd Knollys* (Leiden-Boston-Koln: Brill, 2001), 282-283.
[71] Richard Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil: The Radical Underground in Britain, 1660-1663* (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 61-62.
[72] Richard Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 449-450.
[73] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, From the Author to the Reader.
[74] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 1.

"this Nation."[75] Keach's perception of the clear danger to England is all the more clear from Zion's subsequent claim that "there are thousands more within this Land/Who with the Beast art like to fall or stand."[76] Like the Parliamentarians quoted in Hill's work, Keach believed that Antichrist was not only in Rome, but in England as well.

It is difficult to pin down the exact identity of the Woman: that is to say, whether she is meant to stand for the English church only, or the true church in all places. Keach clearly placed Zion in England, given that she states that Protestants in "this Land" were burned at the stake in "Marian days," but Zion's sons are also "scattered…the Earth throughout."[77] While Keach may have been vague as to the exact contours of the true church (there was also no indication, for instance, that he would have limited this definition to nonconformists alone, or to the Baptists), the forces associated with Antichrist were not open to any interpretation. In addition to the Beast, Keach referred specifically to the Whore of Babylon, or, "that Romish Antichristian Harlot," who "doth call my Children *Hereticks*/*Phanaticks*," further associating the persecution of dissent with the forces of Antichrist. Keach depicted Babylon, the Roman Catholic Church, as "bedeck'd in Scarlet," seated on the Beast with a golden cup in her hand and inviting "the Rich and Noble of the Land/For to commit the Sin of Fornication."[78] When Babylon speaks, it is to boast of her worldly power and that of her consort, the pope, who "is the chief in all the Earth/And sits in Peter's Chair/The Keys of Hell and Death he hath/And is past all compare." Zion counters with a litany of examples of atrocities committed by

[75] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 3.
[76] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 4.
[77] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 28, 19.
[78] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 9-10.

Catholics in Europe and elsewhere.[79] The eschatological battle lines between the worldly, carnal forces of popery and Babylon and those of the spiritual and persecuted true church, Zion, were clearly drawn.

While expressing the distress of nonconformists in the 1660s, faced with suppression and insecurity in a world not of their making, Keach's eschatological writing was not entirely pessimistic. In addition to describing the immediate hardships of the true church, the poem looks forward to deliverance. Zion "shall deliver'd be" with the return of Jesus to rule personally on earth: he would "arise/To break in pieces all our Enemies" and then "he shall be King/And to poor *Zion* shall redemption bring."[80] In spite of the sorry state of affairs for Zion and her children, Keach made it clear that their pleas would still find their way to God's ears. Jesus himself was depicted to give assurance to the faithful. While he admitted that "For a small time I have forsaken thee," and that "thou in their hands art now/Yet Power's mine, and Wisdom: I know how/To strengthen thee, and make them all to bow."[81] Conversely while Zion, and by extension Keach, believed that this return would come soon, until that time Zion's children were advised, "Do you not stir; [Antichrist] hath some time to reign/Him to destroy, it is beyond your skill." Instead, they were told to "to pray/To be prepared for that blessed Day."[82] If Zion's words are any indication, Keach believed that faith and forbearance were the only immediate recourse for Christians until the time of God's deliverance. Zion's promise was that "I will unto thy holy Name retreat," and that "thy Name, O God, [I] will magnifie/And with much patience, I will undergo/Thy indignation, Lord, for well I know/That I have sinn'd against

[79]Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 23, 26-28.
[80] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 22, 8.
[81] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 20, 18.
[82] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 8.

thy holy Name."[83] Though God might punish the faithful in the short term, their patience would be rewarded.

Keach set forth the basic dynamic for the rest of his eschatological writings in *Zion in Distress*. He clearly identified popery as the chief antagonist, and regarded the ever-present threat of persecution and popish infiltration to be present in England as well as abroad. He anticipated that Christians, and nonconformists in particular, would suffer greatly in the short term, but that Christ's return was approaching. Finally, while he anticipated that the true church would be delivered, he also believed that until the proper moment arrived, Baptists would need to suffer under their yoke peacefully. His subsequent work on the same subject in the 1670s and 1680s were consistent with the original poem, but they were also responsive to contemporary developments in England. The events of the 1680s would provide ample opportunity for Keach to return to Zion, and would lead him to believe that deliverance was finally at hand.

Exclusion and Revolution

Political developments in the late 1670s and the 1680s provided ample material for Keach's anti-popish polemic. Throughout the public excitement over the Popish Plot beginning in 1678, the Exclusion Crisis that followed, and the Glorious Revolution that closed the decade, the spectre of popery and arbitrary government was an immediate concern. Appropriately, then, his publications in the 1680s were bookended by two sequels to *Zion in Distress*: *Sion in Distress: or, the Groans of the Protestant Church* (1681. This was effectively an expanded second edition to the 1666 poem) and *Distressed*

[83] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress*, 22.

Sion Relieved (1689). These publications kept to the basic framework of his first venture into eschatological poetry, but being written in the changing political context of the 1680s, their concerns took on new relevance.

Sion in Distress was written in the midst of a Tory backlash and drew upon a heightened sense of anti-popish anxiety. In 1681, England had just seen the end of its lengthy constitutional crisis over the issue of Exclusion. After years of contestation over the right of James, Duke of York, to ascend to the throne in spite of his Catholicism, Charles II had successfully put an end to the exclusionists' opposition during the Oxford Parliament of 1681. He would not call another parliament for the remainder of his reign. The years until Charles' death also saw a concerted "Tory Reaction" in which the king worked to strengthen the position of his supporters and secure a safe succession for his brother. By 1682, according to Tim Harris, "many had internalized Tory propaganda concerning…dissenters," and grand juries showed a greater willingness to put the penal laws into effect.[84] Charles's victory on behalf of his Catholic brother, and the apparent consequences for nonconformists, probably helped to motivate Keach in his publication of *Sion in Distress* in the same year.

The Exclusion crisis had seen great hostility to the prospect of a "popish successor" to the throne, and this hostility was expressed through large public processions and demonstrations on the one hand, and a litany of hostile print on the other.[85] As Harris observes, "loss of the support of the London masses could seriously jeopardize the stability of a regime" and Whigs and Tories alike needed to take advantage of popular

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[84] Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (New York: Allen Lane, 2005), 304, 327.

[85] The term "popish successor" is borrowed from just one of these works: Elkanah Settle, *The character of a popish successour and what England may expect from such a one* (London: Printed for T. Davies, 1681).

support.[86] In February 1680, for instance, Tory youths organized a Rump Burning featuring effigies of Oliver Cromwell as a response to a Whig pope-burning procession in November.[87] The Exclusion Crisis created clear lines between opposing parties, and it was a division in which "religion was perhaps a more important factor…than pure constitutional principle."[88] Harris observes that the members of the Whig Green Ribbon Club "actively supported or promoted the interests of dissenters, the vast majority being dissenters themselves," while the Salutation Tavern where the Duke of Buckingham held a Whig meeting was "on the limited evidence of membership that survives, a Baptist club," of which the printer Francis Smith was a member.[89] Keach was associated with Whigs not only through their common religion, but through working relationships as well. Benjamin Harris, whose *Appeal from the Country to the City* advocated for the Duke of Monmouth's succession to the throne, printed Keach's *War with the Devil* and *Grand Imposter Discovered*, and continued to publish Keach's hymns and sermons in the 1690s.[90] While Whigs and nonconformists attacked York and his supporters for popish tyranny, Tories like Roger L'Estrange flung insults and hostility at nonconformist "phanaticks" in turn.[91]

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[86] Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 227.
[87] Harris, *Restoration*, 265.
[88] Harris, *London Crowds*, 4.
[89] Harris, *London Crowds*, 119-120.
[90] Publications in the 1690s include Keach, *Feast of Fat Things*, and Benjamin Keach, *Christ Alone the way to Heaven: or, Jacob's Ladder Improved. Containing Four Sermons, Lately Preach'd on Genesis. XXVIII. XII. Wherein the Doctrine of Free-Grace is display'd, through Jesus Christ* (London: Printed and Sold by Benjamin Harris, 1698).
[91] Harris, *London Crowds*, 136-139. The Exclusion Crisis was also the context in which L'Estrange published *The Committee, or, Popery in Masquerade*, which was discussed in Chapter 1. Further instances of L'Estange's invective against Whigs and nonconformists in this period, see Mark Goldie, "Roger L'Estrange's *Observator* and the Exorcism of the Plot," in *Roger L'Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008) and Peter Hinds, *The horrid Popish plot : Roger L'Estrange and the circulation of political discourse in late seventeenth-century London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

This was the climate in which Keach revised and had published his poem, *Sion in Distress*. As the name indicates, it followed the same narrative as, and was in many respects identical to, *Zion in Distress*, though it did come with certain additions. Keach wrote in his address to the reader that the revival of his earlier poem was appropriate in light of the Protestant Church's "present *Calamity*," and described "the *Plots* and *Contrivances* of *ROME* against *SION*; the Marks of the *Antichristian Beast* and *Scarlet Whore*." He expressed comfort in the fact that the "Spirit of the Nation" was so much against popery, "And that our *Parliament* is so Thorow and Resolved to crush that *Interest*, whose *Principles* teach them to be…Trayterous *Subjects*, ill *Neighbours*, and worse *Soveraigns*."[92] His references to Papists as "worse Soveraigns" could hardly have made his sympathies in the Exclusion Crisis clearer.

Keach continued with these Whig sentiments by revisiting the Popish Plot as well. Another addition to the revised was his expression of support for the heroism of Titus Oates and Isaiah Tongue in revealing the imagined Jesuit plot to kill Charles II. In an expanded passage, Sion's Children were depicted as being hopeful for the future "*Since Heav'n exposes the Results of* Rome/*To* Publick Notice; *since the Traytors come*/*To Legal Execution,*" and because "*brave* Heroes *represent the Nation*/*Whose clear sagacious penetrating Eyes*/*Dive into* Rome's *abhorred Mysteries*." Keach also recruited the slain Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, "whose immortal glory/*Martyr*'d for me, shall ever live in Story," as a victim of Antichrist's plotting. [93] The Popish Plot had only helped to confirm the eschatological role of Rome in Keach's narrative, and Keach's support for Titus Oates continued through the 1680s. In 1684, *Travels of True Godliness* included a

[92] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, "To the Reader."
[93] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 21-22.

barely coded description of Oates's revelation of the plot. In this account, God's providence defeated a plot against Godliness, who perceived that his antagonist Apollyon was engaged in a "grand Conspiracy…in many Countryes where he had been formerly countenanced."[94] Keach's allegorical Babylon also claims to have "Torys *at my Beck*," to implicate the Tories of the Exclusion Crisis and Reaction in the larger eschatological struggle between Protestantism and Popery.[95]

Sion in Distress provides adequate proof of Keach's opposition to James before his accession to the throne in 1685, but there are reasons to wonder about his attitude to James II as king. Scott Sowerby has argued that, far from being "stillborn or fruitless," James's efforts at implementing toleration "attracted substantial support from Quakers, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Catholics." Sowerby also demonstrates that numerous Baptists were active as "regulators"—agents working to enact the repeal of the Test Act—and serving as civic office holders during James's reign.[96] Moreover, these supporters included former exclusionists like Henry Care, editor of the anti-Catholic *Popish Courant*, and Elkanah Settle, author of *The character of a popish successor*, so Keach's anti-popery was no guarantee that he did not sympathize with, or even support, James's efforts.[97]

Keach's associate William Kiffin was among those Baptists who benefited from the King's largesse, becoming an alderman in London, though he later claimed that he had been compelled to serve and had no stake in James's political goals.[98] Keach himself does

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[94] Keach, *True Godliness,* 73-74, 75.
[95] Keach, *True Godliness*, 85.
[96] Scott Sowerby, *Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013), 9, 38, 136-138, 143-145. See also Tim Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685-1720* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), 205-224.
[97] Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 88-90.
[98] William Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin: Written by himself and edited from*

not seem to have been a supporter of James, and certainly he performed no public volte-face like Care and Settle, but there is no conclusive evidence that he was an opponent. *Sion in Distress* was still in circulation and Roger Morrice recorded in his *Entring Book* in July 1686 that some 15 booksellers "[were] bound over by s*i*r R*oger* le s*trange* for words to this effect in it / Papists are ill subjects and worse [illegible] princes / Papists are ill subjects and worse princes," but Keach wrote no new apocalyptic works from 1685 to 1688.[99] All told, he seems to have fallen silent during this period, and so his continued opposition during James II's reign is uncertain.

If it is difficult to establish Keach's positions during James's reign, however, the end of that reign inspired Keach's third "Zion" poem, *Distressed Sion Relieved*. With this poem, he proclaimed that James's reign had been the very climax of Antichrist's abuses against England. While Keach had attributed the death of Godfrey, and the planned assassination of Charles II, to the machinations of Antichrist, the reign of James provided him with a veritable mass killing of Protestants to take advantage of. The Monmouth Rebellion of 1685, and the subsequent executions of Monmouth's supporters, provided one of the set pieces of Keach's poem. He depicted a "monster" coming from the West in that year, namely "A Lord Chief Justice of the Lower Region," the oft-maligned George Jeffreys.[100] During the "Bloody Assizes" following the rebellion "The High-ways like a Slaughter-house became," according to Keach, and the executions would become an important episode in Baptist martyrology.[101] The Baptist preacher Sampson Lark "Who

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the Original Manuscript, Ed. William Orme (London: Burton and Smith, 1823), 85-88; Scott Sowerby, "Forgetting the Repealers: Religious Toleration and Historical Amnesia in Later Stuart England," *Past and Present* 215 (2012): 85-123.

[99] Roger Morrice, *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, Vol. 3, ed. Tim Harris (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 171.

[100] Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved*, 21.

[101] Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved*, 24.

did dissolve the Stone in many a Heart," is among these martyrs, of whom Keach asked, "Must *Samson* fall by the *Philistines* hand." Likewise, alderman Henry Cornish died with "cheerful looks" as "The Heav'ns their mourning Garments do put on."[102]

While Keach saw the year 1689 as marking a turning point in the battle against Antichrist, it is also worth noting that developments in 1688 only confirmed what he had already suspected. As early as 1681, he had quoted Pierre Du Moulin's *Accomplishment of the Prophecies* that "*Persecution of the Church under the* Pope, *shall have an end in* (*or about*) *the Year,* 1689."[103] It thus comes as no surprise that Keach jumped at the opportunity to identify the importance of events in Britain when the fateful year arrived. In *Distressed Sion*, Keach depicted William and Mary as the deliverers of Protestants in a country much afflicted by popery. Before their arrival "*Poor* England*, alas! did bleeding lye/For many years inslav'd by Tyranny*," and had been subjected to the false medicines of the Jesuits including a "Golden Pill" of "Liberty" which would entirely change her body's "Constitution."[104] Once again, in retrospect at least, Keach disavowed any sympathy with James II's scheme for repeal and toleration. As an allegory for England being subjected to James's arbitrary government and constitutional tinkering on behalf of the Church of Rome, this verse is not at all subtle.

Keach clearly believed that England had a central eschatological role to play in the immediate future and anticipated English leadership in the coming conflict between Protestantism and Rome. As William came to the throne of England, Keach pleaded, "*let*

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[102] Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved*, 25, 40-41.
[103] Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved*, 42-43; Pierre du Moulin, *The accomplishment of the prophecies; or The third booke in defence of the Catholicke faith contained in the booke of the high & mighty King Iames.I* (Oxford: Printed by Joseph Barnes, 1613).
[104] Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved*, A3.

him, Lord, be a hot scorching Sun/To thy grand Foe, The Whore of Babylon." [105] But Anglo-centric though Keach's account was, it was still very much situated in a continental context. Soon after *Distressed Sion Relieved*, Keach published another explicitly eschatological work, *Antichrist Stormed*. In this work he made the case that the biblical Antichrist must be the papacy. The papacy's eschatological role, he claimed, was proven by the manner in which it claimed to be the shepherd and to forgive sins, while at the same time it acted as the beast, praying on and persecuting Christians and drinking the blood of the Saints, from Waldensians, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Dissenters.[106] The exact dating of 1689 was based on the projections of Du Moulin, whom Keach had quoted in 1681, as well as more contemporary authors. On the one hand, Keach recounted that Pierre Jurieu had identified the street in which the Witnesses are slain (Revelation 11:7-10) as France, where the church is ruined and lays "as if dead." Jurieu's account was more or less in agreement with Keach that the true religion would be extinguished for three and a half years and that, in the French divine's words, "The deliverance of the Church will fall out in the year, 1689."[107]

Jurieu's work, translated into English in 1687, dated the three and a half years as beginning in October 1685 with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which brought an end to the official toleration French Protestants.[108] Keach's dating of this period beginning in 1685 had a different rationale. He favoured the explanation that the street in

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[105] Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved*, A5.
[106] Benjamin Keach, *Antichrist Stormed: Or, Mystery Babylon the great Whore, and great City, proved to be the present Church of Rome. Wherein all Objections are fully answered* (London: Printed for Nathaniel Crouch, 1689), 12-18.
[107] Keach, *Antichrist Stormed,* 180; Pierre Jurieu, *The accomplishment of the Scripture prophecies, or, The approaching deliverance of the church proving that the papacy is the antichristian kingdom* (London: 1687).
[108] Johnston, *Revelation Restored*, 198-199.

question was Britain, not France, and justified this relocation on account of the fact that the Protestant church was larger and more zealous in Britain. Jurieu's three and a half years from the death of the witnesses until 1689 also fit the British narrative. That period of time would last from 1685, when James II's tyranny began, until the Revolution gave Keach reason to believe that the witnesses had risen.[109] Keach was "persuaded [that] His present Majesty is raised up to do great things for Christ" and that while some might try to "obstruct the work of God, and uphold an interest for the Beast, yet they shall be blasted in their designs, and come to shame and ruin in the end."[110]

Antichrist Stormed also includes brief accounts of several prophecies that Keach referenced in support of his own account of events. These prophecies included that of Michael Sardivogius in 1616, on a "Northern Prince," and an earlier prophecy of Nostradamus. Some prophecies seemed to point to a Dutch leader in particular, which only bolstered Keach's claims that the Revolution of 1688 had been foretold. He quoted Nostrodamus's prophecies that Rome would be ruled by British head, and that a Dutch Prince, sprung from Trojan Blood, would chase off the "Mahometan multitude" and "return to the Church her Ancient Eminency and Sincerity." One anonymous source, "said to be of above fifty years standing," predicted that "When once the *Orange* and the *Rose*/Unite, beware *England's* old foes." Another prophecy spoke of intermarriage between an Orange and a Daughter of Denmark, which Keach explained had been fulfilled because Mary was a direct descendent of James VI and I's wife, Anne of Denmark.[111] Keach drew upon all of these far-flung prophetic and eschatological works

[109] Keach, *Antichrist Stormed*, 183-188.
[110] Keach, *Antichrist Stormed*, 188.
[111] Keach, *Antichrist Stormed*, 188-192.

in order to confirm his own anticipation: the final battle against Rome and the Antichrist had begun, with William III at the head.

Keach was far from alone in placing the victory of William and Mary, and Britain's war against France in the 1690s, into an apocalyptic framework. As Johnston contends, "such ideas were actually at the centre of the Anglican clergy's celebration of William and Mary's victory."[112] In Tony Claydon's book, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, he likewise argues that such an emphasis on eschatological imagery was a well-developed strategy on the part of one of William's foremost supporters, Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. Claydon points to various sermons of Burnet's including one at Saint James in which he referenced the two church model of Bale and Foxe before asserting that William had fought for the true church against the false, and thanking God that events "had led to the rise of a godly prince, and…promoted the cause of moral reform."[113] Like Keach, Burnet also referred to threats to the church from a popish enemy working to undermine Protestantism from within England.[114]

Claydon also points to efforts at conspicuous moral reform and devotion, which he sees as another branch of godly propaganda in William's favour. These efforts included his preferment of "heroes of the church's battle against popery, and recognised leaders of the spiritual awakening in London," such as Simon Patrick, John Tillotson, and Thomas Tenison.[115] They also included increasingly frequent fasts, public humiliations and sermons as displays of public piety during the wars in Ireland and on the continent.[116]

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[112] Johnston, *Revelation Restored*, 202
[113] Tony Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 47.
[114] Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 52.
[115] Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 96.
[116] Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 105.

Keach was receptive to this tactic on the part of the court, and preached and published a sermon "for Publick Prayer and Humiliation" to observe one of these occasions in December 1695. He apparently still saw God's guiding hand at work "who put it into the Hearts of the *King* and *Parliament*, to seek God at this difficult time," and expressed his belief that "a National Humiliation and Reformation, may prevent National Judgements" during conflict.[117]

Keach and his conformist counterparts alike expressed zeal for the international Protestant cause, "uniting all European protestants," of which Britain and the United Provinces' close alliance against the "'great persecutor of protestants' (Louis XIV)" gave ample evidence.[118] Burnet and Simon Patrick each anticipated "the universal advance of Protestant Christianity" and encouraged English unity "lest 'we should defeat the design of God's gracious Providence: by continuing our old differences and enmities.'"[119] Keach likewise advocated for unity from his fellow nonconformists, writing, "O be not guilty of such pride/Not to be on your Sovereign's side."[120] Sermons like these pitted a Protestant King against a Roman Antichrist, a narrative that conformists and nonconformists could each endorse. The concept of Godly kings acting to perform the work of tearing down the Whore of Babylon, Hill observes, can be found in writings ranging from Martin Bucer's *De Regno Christi* in 1550 to John Bunyan.[121] In his work on Bunyan, Michael Mullett concurs in saying that Bunyan had a millennial view that celebrated Kingship, which he

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[117] Benjamin Keach, *God Acknowledged: Or the True Interest of the Nation, And all that Fear God. Opened in a Sermon Preached December the 11th, 1695. Being the Day Appointed by the King, for Publick Prayer and Humiliation* (London: Printed for William Marshal, 1696), 17, 36.
[118] Claydon, *Godly Revolution*, 137-38.
[119] Johnston, *Revelation Restored*, 203.
[120] Keach, *Distressed Sion*, 127. Johnston also quotes a similar select from the same passage of Keach's poem (Johnston, *Revelation Restored*, 221).
[121] Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England*, 13, 80.

connects back to Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*. Mullett also states that Bunyan shared this quality with Hanserd Knollys and Israel Tongue "both of whom looked to Charles II to crush the papal Antichrist."[122] If Keach sailed along with the prevailing winds coming from Burnett, he did so with a good deal of company.

Of course, William III's leadership did not lead to the destruction of the Papacy, nor did the apocalypse arrive in the decade of the 1690s. But Keach's eschatological writing, and anticipation of great apocalyptic change, continued. In 1698, he preached a sermon on the subject of Isaiah 54:10, "Neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath Mercy on thee." In this sermon, Keach broached the subject of the recent Treaty of Ryswick, which brought an end to nine years of war with France. He spoke about the peace between God and man that had been occasioned by the "Great Joy there is among us in this Nation…*upon account of the Peace* lately concluded betwixt the *French* King and the *Confederate Princes*."[123] In spite of the end of the conflict, Keach acknowledged that many of his listeners might still be hoping for the imminent fall of Babylon. He urged this audience to remain patient for the time being, anticipating great changes by the end of 1700: "No doubt but amazing Revolutions are ready to break out in the Earth."[124] But in contrast to Keach's admission, accurate as it turned out, that "*Peace* made between Kingdoms and Nations may soon be broken" he stated that "there is a *Peace* which being made shall be lasting, and never removed" between man and God.[125] William's reign as king, and his successes in defending

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[122] Michael Mullett, *John Bunyan in Context* (Keele, Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1996), 110.
[123] Benjamin Keach, *The Display of Glorious Grace: Or, the Covenant of Peace, opened in Fourteen Sermons Lately Preached, In which the Errors of the present Day, about Reconciliation and Justification, are Detected* (London: Printed for S. Bridge, 1698), 2.
[124] Keach, *Display of Glorious Grace*, 3.
[125] Keach, *Display of Glorious Grace*, 4.

Protestantism against Louis XIV, continued to be a sign that the spiritual state of affairs in Britain had taken a change for the better.

Conclusion

Each of the works discussed in this chapter exhibited a single concern on the part of Keach. While the focus of works like *War with the Devil*'s was on a young man's personal morality, and the eschatological works like *Sion in Distress* concerned themselves with impending destruction, each presented a fundamental confrontation between the forces of salvation and damnation. Always present was an endangered minority, the godly, facing the threats and temptations of a carnal world. Whether it was the young man's fancies of "sweet pastime and mirth," or the Whore of Babylon's "lascivious Looks and Wanton Eyes," the carnal things of the world always posed mortal risks. Conversely, the worldly youth and Babylon would each dismiss true Christians and their concern for spiritual regeneration as "phanaticks."[126]

In Chapter 1, we encountered the word "phanatick" among the various terms of abuse applied to Baptists and other nonconformists. Its appearance in Keach's poems, as an attack on Christian conscience and Zion's children, gives some indication as to where Keach saw himself and his coreligionists fitting into the grand scheme of moral and eschatological matters. Viewed in broad terms, the various characters of True Godliness, the Soul, and Sion all appear as a persecuted, vulnerable minority faced with a hostile and sinful world, and waiting upon salvation that only Christ could provide. Baptists and nonconformists, then, were left with the same basic advice that Keach's Sion gave to her children: they were to remain faithful, and await deliverance from the forces of

[126] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 6 17, 3;. Keach, *Sion in Distress,* 63; *Zion in Distress*, 9-10.

Antichrist. This deliverance arrived with the Revolution of 1688, but the work of spiritual regeneration continued.

Keach's optimism with regards to William's reign in Britain as an instrument of God's will did not mean that he believed the struggle between spirit and flesh was over. In his 1698 sermon, he reminded listeners that God was under no obligation to "save the whole *Lump* of Mankind," but rather "in Gospel Times he called a few poor and illiterate Fishermen, and such like Persons, and let the *Pharisees* and Learned *Rabbins* remain under the power of Sin and Satan."[127] While the battle against the Antichristian forces of Rome on the continent was encouraging, the basic dichotomy between the spirit and the flesh remained. The war with the Devil was a daily spiritual concern for Christians, not only the external battle with Antichrist.

Keach's moral works, no less than his works of eschatology, were his way of engaging with a world that was starkly divided between the spirit and the flesh, Christ and the Antichrist. Keach's poems, sermons, and hymns were a tool to fight for souls, and he used his art to guide those who might be tempted by the sensual appeals of sin, popery, and carnal things. While he believed in the 1690s that the state of affairs for English Protestantism had improved, he would nonetheless turn his attention to doctrine, ordinances, and Baptist orthodoxy. As befit his polemical style, however, Keach's forays into such matters would be almost as combative as his poems' confrontation with the Antichrist.

[127] Keach, *Glorious Grace*, 17-18.

Chapter 4: Worship, Ordinances, and Salvation in the 1690s

Keach spent much of his career articulating the Baptists' position in opposition to external threats, including persecution, popery, and Quakerism, all in the polemical tone of the "warlike Author," as John Dunton put it.[1] During the 1690s, however, much of his effort was directed at issues internal to the Baptist community. In the years following the Glorious Revolution and the Toleration Act, Keach confronted dissenting voices from within his own congregation at Horselydown, and became embroiled in a debate about the acceptability of hymn singing and the status of singing as an ordinance within the church. Given that he himself was a prolific hymn writer, and would sometimes include a hymn expounding spiritual lessons along with his published sermons or poetry, this dispute was almost a personal affront. The confrontation between Keach and the anti-hymn Baptists at Horselydown, into which other Baptist writers were quickly drawn, would lead to a split in his congregation and the founding of a new church at Maze Pond. The hymn controversy would overlap with broader issues of Baptist attitudes towards scriptural ordinances as a component of worship, as well as to the role of women in Baptist congregations.

Keach also spent a significant portion of the 1690s using the pulpit and the pen to redress other erroneous beliefs and safeguard the Calvinism of his fellow Baptists. He preached, and published, a plethora of sermons taking on issues of soteriology and free grace, aspects of his faith that he perceived as being under threat from Arminian and Antinomian forces within nonconformity. He regarded the late Richard Baxter in particular as being a source of Arminian error, to the extent that he called such beliefs "Baxterian." Instruction within his own community and the confrontation of errors that

[1] John Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton* (London: J. Nichols, Son, and Bentley, 1818), 177.

might mislead his coreligionists were Keach's preoccupation in the late stages of his career: his earlier sallies against Quakers and conformity, and his pleas for toleration, were less prominent in his written works, though on at least one occasion he did feel it necessary to co-author a circular concerning a case of persecution in King's Lynn.

Even in this case, Keach and Richard Adams emphasized that the abuse of the Baptist in question, James Marham, was exceptional under William's reign, and their letter was less concerned with the principle of toleration than with the practicalities of raising money for Marham and directing it to a coffee house near the Royal Exchange in order to be collected.[2] Keach's priorities seem to have changed, which might be explained by B.R. White's argument that 1688 marked a significant shift in the nature of nonconformity. Perhaps the post-Toleration Baptist was one who no longer considered his life to be "a warfare, wherein Christ was his Captain," and whose community began to take on "the shape and colour which were a mark eighteenth-century Dissent."[3] In White's estimation, the years after 1688 were the "twilight" of seventeenth century Puritanism: "the heroic age of the persecution was over and instead had come the time of half-hearted institutionalization and internal doctrinal dispute."[4] An alternative explanation is that, Keach and his fellows, once freed from the immediate concerns of self-defence and self-preservation, were able to turn their attention to the maintenance of their own Gospel Churches and the firmer establishment of orthodoxy within them.

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[2] Benjamin Keach and Richard Adams, "Lyn Persecution Letter from Benjamin Keach and Richard Adams to Richard Kent," Angus Library: Whitchurch Collection, C. 17. The letter is not dated, but it refers to the reign of "King William," with no mention of Mary II, which might date the letter as having been written after her death, but before William's own death in 1702.

[3] B.R. White, "The Twilight of Puritanism in the years before and after 1688," in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan Israel and Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 308.

[4] White, "Twilight of Puritanism," 325.

Keach vs Marlow: The Hymn-Singing Controversy

No minute book or record of the proceedings and membership at Keach's church survives, but a record does exist of the irreparable breach that occurred between Keach and twenty of his congregants in 1691. These members would go on to form the Maze Pond church, and the records of that church are now held in the Angus Library and Regents Park College, Oxford. The Maze Pond Church Book includes a detailed narrative of the church's foundation. The story begins in February 1691, when Keach moved that singing take place after the breaking of bread each week. This motion provoked a disagreement, and the congregation decided to have a meeting to decide the matter on the first of March. At this meeting, a vote was held that "the Church would give liberty to them that are for Singing, to Sing in Publick only after the last Prayer, and they that are not for publick Singing having their liberty to forbear or if they please quietly to goe out."[5] Those who were dissatisfied with this decision addressed their concerns to Keach as a "scruple of conscience," to which Keach apparently gave an over-dramatic response and "replyed saying brother doe you know what you doe, you had as good take a knife and stab me to the heart."[6]

After this less than favourable reception, the anti-hymn congregants requested a disputation before the entire church. This request was not granted, but they were allowed to discourse with the congregation's elders/leaders. What followed, in the Maze Pond record of events, was an irregular proceeding, stage-managed by Keach to have a vote taken without the dissenting members being given a chance to defend themselves,

[5] Maze Pond Church Book (1691-1745), MS 2/4/1, Angus Library, Oxford, 31.
[6] Maze Pond, 32.

moving that they be "proceeded against as disorderly persons."[7] In spite of Keach's hostility, however, it was resolved that members with scruples could "goe out at such times of Singing if they pleased, and yet the Church would continue their Communion with them and live together in love." The upshot of this first meeting, however, is that should the anti-hymn members not accommodate themselves to the new status quo they would need to find another congregation, though the congregation sent three of its members to visit their disaffected brethren and "labour to convince them if possible."[8]

After the initial dispute, the anti-hymn group sought intervention from the other London Baptists. They complained to elders, including William Kiffin, in a subsequent meeting on September 21st. Kiffin and the other elders effectively refused to intervene.[9] A final meeting on October 6th saw the group prepare a series of five articles against hymns, which specified that any singing should be done by spiritual gift, that they were opposed to set words and to communal singing, and that the issue of women speaking in church made their involvement in singing completely unacceptable. During this final dispute, Keach was depicted as breaking out "into a wonderfull passion, and in that Strange unbecomming Spirit break [sic] out into Prayer without any notice thereof to the People…and in his Prayer called upon God to Judge these men, and went on after that manner."[10] Needless to say, the proceedings that followed did not go the way of the anti-hymn group, and the eight men were excommunicated. The thirteen women who were part of the group maintained their communion with the church for a time, and wrote a letter repeating their concerns. Keach responded with a letter declaring that as a result of

[7] Maze Pond, 32, 38.
[8] Maze Pond, 39.
[9] Maze Pond, 42.
[10] Maze Pond, 44-45.

their actions in separating themselves from the church "I doe declare in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the Consent of this Church that you have hereby dismembered [yourselves] and so are no longer to be lookt upon as a Member of this Church."[11]

What followed for the anti-hymn group was a somewhat itinerant period from 1692 to 1693. The group was in lengthy discussion with the congregation of Robert Steed, with which they considered joining permanently, and experienced some uncertainty over whether a group of "Baptised Believers" such as themselves could form a church of their own when there were so many others in existence in London. Finally, the twenty members who had left the Horselydown Church first met as a congregation in February 1694.[12] Murdina MacDonald has recorded that a rift formed between the new congregation and both Horselydown and the Cripplegate congregation of Robert Steed that lasted until 1706.[13] Appropriately, then, given the scandal and bad relations attending the new congregation, one of their first recorded decisions was that a "narrative of all our troubles should be drawn up and recorded in our Church Book."[14] Their new confession of faith, also recorded in the first pages of the Maze Pond Church Book, included a pointed condemnation of the hymns of Keach and his Horselydown church. The fourteenth article of this confession states that:

> Singing ought noe otherwise to be preached in the Church of Christ but by a spirituall Gift by one at once it being a Spirituall attainment to be coveted after and not to be brought in, any Sett prelimited forme of Words promiscuously used by others which method We believe is a gross error equal with common rationall Sett forme Prayer.[15]

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[11] Maze Pond, 50.
[12] Maze Pond, 66-78, 81.
[13] Murdina MacDonald, "London Calvinistic Baptists 1689-1727: Tensions Within a Dissenting Community under Toleration" (PhD diss., Regents Park College, Oxford, 1982), 87-98.
[14] Maze Pond, 91-93.
[15] Maze Pond, 3.

This confession was signed and witnessed by twenty-four people (eleven men and thirteen women), and in addition to the original twenty members from Horselydown we find the name of Isaac Marlow, who had never been a member of Keach's congregation, but had in fact been his most active opponent in the controversy.[16]

While the Maze Pond account gives some insight into the process through which this schism happened at Horselydown, it excludes much about the content of the dispute beyond the church walls. The debate played out not only in face-to-face meetings, but also in extensive printed polemic. The only direct mention of this printed dispute in the Maze Pond account is a brief reference to the Horselydown elders reprimanding Brother Edward Little during the first meeting in March 1691, "for giving out Mr Isaac Marlow's sheet of observations of abuses and contradictions published in Mr Keach's book called the Breach repaired."[17] There is considerable overlap between Marlow's arguments and those that the anti-hymn group made against Keach; given this reference to his writing so early on in the dispute, it takes no stretch of the imagination to conclude that they were guided by Marlow's work. Keach was under attack not only within his congregation, but at some length outside of it as well. Keach was put into a position where he needed to defend himself in print even as he was trying to manage the threat of a permanent separation in his church. Given his efforts to keep the congregation intact, it was only fitting that his book on the topic was titled *The Breach Repaired*.

The printed debate began in the early months of 1691, with Marlow's publication of *A Brief Discourse Concerning Singing in the Publick Worship of God in the Gospel-*

[16] Maze Pond, 4.
[17] Maze Pond, 32.

Church.[18] In fact, Marlow published a second work on the subject, which was appended to the first along with an introductory epistle addressed to Keach. Here he admitted that he published the second offering in order to pre-empt the response that he expected would follow shortly.[19] As anticipated, Keach responded soon thereafter with *A Breach Repaired in God's Worship*. Marlow contributed one final work on the subject in 1692.

Marlow's 1692 work, *Truth Soberly Defended in a Serious REPLY to Mr. Keach's Book*, recounts how the debate spilled out beyond the printed page. In an attempt to resolve the issue after the General Assembly of Baptists in London declined to settle the argument, Keach and Marlow tried to arrange an examination of their books by a group of eight of their brethren in 1691 (the exact date is not specified). Each man chose four fellow Baptists for this task, but the examination as a whole fell through due to a disagreement over what process they would follow in conducting the examination.[20] Ongoing printed recriminations followed this failure to resolve the issue, and more London Baptists joined the debate. Marlow's *Truth Soberly Defended* includes testimony in his favour from the four brethren he had chosen for the examination, along with a statement in his support by the nine men (though none of the women) who had left Horselydown.[21] While Marlow made use of narratives from a number of sympathetic

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[18] Much of the contents from here to page 165, concerning the printed debate between Keach and Marlow, were previously included in Justin Irwin, "'Sweet mirth and Musick rare': Sensual spirituality in the work of Benjamin Keach," in *Mediating Religious Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Torrance Kirby and Matthew Milner (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 191-219. All references to Catharine Sutton, on pages 160 and 161, are new to this dissertation and no mention was made of Sutton in that book chapter.
[19] Isaac Marlow, *A Brief Discourse Concerning Singing in the Publick Worship of GOD in the Gospel-Church* (London: Printed for the author, 1690).
[20] Isaac Marlow, *Truth Soberly Defended in a Serious REPLY to MR. Benjamin Keach's Book, intituled, The Breach Repaired in God's Worship* (London: 1692), Appendix, 4-6, 8-9, 15-22. Marlow's chosen brethren were Edward Man, George Barret, Robert Steed, and Richard Hallowell, while Keach's were one Brother Masters, Leonard Harrison, Samuel Baggwell, and William Collins (though Marlow objected to the inclusion of Collins, minister at the Petty France church, because he was reputed to be the man who wrote the appendix to Keach's *Breach Repaired*).
[21] Marlow, *Truth Soberly Defended*, Appendix 21, 43.

coreligionists, additional publications supported Keach's position. Hanserd Knollys and Joseph Wright, both long established figures in London Baptist circles, each wrote a response to Marlow in 1691.[22] Another anonymous reply to Marlow preceded these, its authors identified only as "S.W., J.C., J.L."[23]

The actual arguments in each of these publications add little new information to the debate, as they largely restrict themselves to restating the positions of Keach or Marlow and grant them additional support as members of the same religious community. The debate in print would continue for some time, involving Marlow on the one side, and other writers like Richard Allen and William Collins on the other.[24] An informal organization of several Baptist ministers who met at Jones's Coffee House in Finch Lane also collectively came to the defence of Keach and William Collins with a paper endorsed by ten ministers including Wapping minister Hercules Collins, Richard Allen, and Richard Adams of the Devonshire Square church.[25] All of which indicates that the debate over hymn-singing resonated among contemporary Baptists and the issues at stake

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[22] Hanserd Knollys, *An Answer to a Brief Discourse Concerning Singing In the publick Worship of God in the Gospel-Church, By J.M. 1690* (London: Printed for the Author, 1691); Joseph Wright, *Folly detected or, Some animadversions on a b[ook] called, A brief discourse [con-]cerning singing in the pub[lic] worship of God; put forth by one Mr. Isaac Marlow 1690* (London: Sold by Harris, 1691).

[23] S.W., J.C., J.L., *Truth Vindicated; Or Mr. Keach's Sober Appeal Answered* (London: 1691). That the writers were anonymous at the time is confirmed by Marlow's complaint about this work in the appendix to *Truth Soberly Defended* (page 6), where he accuses Keach himself of being the author.

[24] Richard Allen, *An essay to prove singing of Psalms with conjoin'd voices a Christian duty and to resolve the doubts concerning it* (London: Printed by J.D. for John Harris, 1696); Isaac Marlow, *The controversie of singing brought to an end, or, A treatise in three parts the first is a tract on singing : the second hath some remarks on Mr. Richard Allen's book called An essay &c. with answers to them : and the third containeth several queries presented to divers elders and ministers with other matters to the baptized churches about London* (London: Printed for the author, 1696); Richard Allen, *A brief vindication of an essay to prove singing of psalms &c from Dr. Russell's animadversions and Mr. Marlow's remarks* (London: Printed for J. Harris and Andrew Bell, 1696); Isaac Marlow, *A clear confutation of Mr. Richard Allen, and his five commendators, from their own confessions, collected out of the vindication of his essay, and fairly improv'd against them, to the overthrow of their conjoined singing in artificial tunes in gospel-worship* (London: 1696). Marlow's work refers to another publication by Collins, but it seems to be no longer extant.

[25] MacDonald, "London Calvinistic Baptists," 73. The complete list included Hercules Collins, Richard Adams, Leonard Harrison, Joseph Stennett, Richard Allen, John Piggott, Benjamin Dennis, Thomas Harrison, Jeremiah Basse, and Keach.

were of interest to ministers throughout the London area who lent their weight to one side of the debate or the other.

This dispute was based on three main points: ordinances drawn from the letters of St. Paul, the historical role of singing in the kingdom of Israel and the early church, and the very nature of singing itself. In the first case, Keach and Marlow both emphasized their fidelity to scripture. Their claims of fidelity were based primarily on the letters of Paul, and in this debate at least, neither man seemed to acknowledge any ambiguity of the scriptures as they related to the practices of a gospel church. Marlow acknowledged Keach's sound practice in most things, including prayer, but asked how he who had "*begun in the Spirit*" could try to find perfection in worship through "the Law or Instinct of Nature."[26] While Keach asserted that the Apostle instructed the churches to sing in Ephesians 5 and 1 Colossians 3:16, Marlow characterized Keach's proposed form of singing as similar to "Forms of Prayer, and Infants-sprinkling."[27] That is, it was akin to errors of the Established Church, or of popery. Marlow claimed that the singing of hymns and psalms was antithetical to Paul and the Spirit, claiming it was a practice only supported by Jewish law.

By way of response, Keach's defence of singing placed Paul's letters in the historical context of the early Church. He explained the passage of 1 Cor. 14:20-34 (on the order in which practices such as tongues and singing were to be included in worship) as being intended to remedy the disorder of the Corinthian church, not to limit the practice of singing. While Marlow used this passage to argue that singing as a group was

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[26] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms*, 14, 16. Page 19 mentions that Keach's congregations prays properly, that is, by order of one praying aloud at a time.

[27] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms*, 8. Keach, *The Breach Repaired in God's Worship: Or, Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, proved to be an Holy Ordinance of Jesus Christ* (London: Printed for the Author, 1691), 57, 136.

therefore forbidden, this is inconsistent with Keach's historicized explanation, as singing together makes not for disorder but "the greater and more sweet Melody."[28] Keach not only denied Paul's opposition to singing, but emphasized the importance of this practice to the Apostle, who "strenuously laboured to take off his Church from all Jewish Rites, Shadowy-Ordinances and Ceremonies, and yet injoyns the Duty of *singing of Psalms and Hymns and spiritual Songs*…by the Authority of the Holy Ghost."[29] Thus, in response to Marlow's claim that his position rested on the Law rather than the spirit, Keach wrote that Paul's own purification of the church proved the vital importance of singing.

The next concern of the disputants was the relationship between singing and Jewish Law. Both men allowed that singing in worship was an accepted practice in the Old Testament, but their dispute reveals the ambivalence in Baptist theology towards Judaism and Law. While Keach used David and Solomon as examples to justify his own work, and the psalms attributed to David are used extensively for Keach's hymns, it is precisely these figures that Marlow targeted.[30] Marlow's opposition to the Psalms was based on their limited historical context, as part of the practice of the First Temple. As such, the religion of which psalms were a part "[consisted] of a worldly Temple…and of carnal Ordinances," which makes the psalms an outward form "which Antichrist somewhat imitates, mixing together the Christian, Jewish, and Pagan Religion."[31] Thus,

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[28] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 145.
[29] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 55.
[30] Keach, *War with the Devil*, 2-4 includes a defence of poetry based on David and Solomon. Several of Keach's hymns are either based on passages from the psalms, or are themselves new settings of the psalms in his two collections: Benjamin Keach, *Spiritual Melody, Containing near Three Hundred Sacred Hymns*, (London: Printed for John Hancock, Castle Alley, near the Royal Exchange, 1691); Benjamin Keach, *A Feast of Fat Things Full of Marrow. Containing several Scripture Songs taken out of the Old and New Testament. With others, composed by the Author* (London: Printed by Benjamin Harris, 1696).
[31] Marlow, *Brief Discourse*, 12-16.

wrote Marlow, the form of the hymn in the seventeenth century was almost synonymous with the corrupt ceremonies of Antichristian Rome.

Thus, while both men agreed on scriptural precedent, the issue emerged whether historical scriptural examples could adequately manifest themselves in the worship of seventeenth-century English Baptists. For Keach, the answer was affirmative, while Marlow was more than sceptical. Keach associated the ceremonial with popery and the Antichrist, but his emphasis on the particularities of excessive formality provided some room for purified practices. Focusing on the dangers of the ceremonial, he identified the first mark of the Beast as being that it was "corrupted with Traditions and Humane Rites." Formalism and traditions were obstacles to genuine faith, and Keach warned readers about "how many *Easy Christians* take/Their *Rest* in *Forms*, and no *distinction* make/'Twixt Shell and Kernel."[32]

In spite of his hostility to formalism, however, Keach's writing opens the door to communal singing. He depicted the excesses of "*Romish Fragments*," which he referred to as "The *Garb*, the *Painting*, and the *Gate* of *Whores*" as being something added to Christian practices: carnal additions that mar natural beauty.[33] Similarly, sinful sensuality appears in his allegorical *Progress of Sin* as a school that teaches students "to *adulterate* the *True* and *Naked Complexion.*" [34] Keach's emphasis on excessive formality and sensuality as an enhancement of that which is natural and beautiful, in turn allowed him to advocate that the practice of ordinances like singing were acceptable in a gospel church. Elsewhere Keach compared popish music to poison, suggesting then that the

[32] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress* (London: 1666), 47; Benjamin Keach, *Sion in Distress or, the Groans of the Protestant Church* (London: Printed by George Larkin, for Enoch Prosser, 1681), 24.
[33] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 46, 22.
[34] Keach, *Progess of Sin*, 147-150.

practice to which the poison was added – song – was still healthy food.[35] If on one hand his poetry attacked those who mistaken the shell for the kernel and value the outward over the internal, on the other hand he maintained that certain ceremonies were still important, because "it is rare to meet with a Kirnel without the Shell."[36]

With respect to the "Kirnel" of singing itself, Marlow drew a straight line from the psalms. His book argued that the psalms originally included the excessive sensuality of musical instruments, an element that he readily connected with Roman Catholicism. He associated hymns with what Keach called "Romish Fragments," suggesting he had composed "a common Praise-Book," and asks if this means he would separate from any church that used another set of hymns.[37] While the comparison to a book of common prayer is obvious, Marlow's suggestion is that by placing value on the form, Keach had become the most craven sort of formalist.

In contrast to Marlow's characterization of his work, Keach suggested that the gospel purified singing into a perfect state from the shadows of the Old Testament. His interpretation held that worship and practice, including songs, had "attained…the Purity of Gospel-Institutions, being purged as by Fire from Antichristian Pollution, being become as pure and transparent Glass." While singing with instruments "was typical and so a Ceremonial Point of Worship, and therefore ceased" singing spiritual songs with heart and voice is "not a Ceremony, but a Moral Duty."[38] Keach understood that his opponents might object to the historical Old Testament practice of singing under the Law because "they offered them up to God with Incense, and divers such like Absurdities in

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[35] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 68.
[36] Benjamin Keach, *The Travels of True Godliness, from the Beginnings of the World to this present Day, in an apt and Pleasant Allegory* (London: Printed for John Dunton, 1684), 7.
[37] Marlow, *Truth Soberly Defended*, xiv-xv.
[38] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 53.

other respects would follow." Nonetheless, he insisted that, "*Types, Shadows, and Ceremonies* are removed and done away."[39] In fact, he argued that in the writings of Eusebius or Tertullian there was no mention of singing with instruments in the early Church. Indeed, the fact that the practice became corrupted, with organs, incense, and other popish elements, was an argument for its restoration "for here in Satan shewed his Malice and Hatred of it, by seeking thus to add Poison to it."[40]

While the historical and scriptural origins of hymn-singing were important, the final crucial aspect of this debate was the definition of song itself. Part of Marlow's argument about the place of hymns in the early Church was based upon his explanation that while singing exists in a vocal form, "yet the *Essence* or Being *of Singing* consists in an inward spiritual Exercise of the Soul or Mind of Man" – just as with prayer.[41] This definition changed the manner in which singing should be performed. The congregation, he explained, must be understood to silently participate, even though only the minister speaks. For proper Gospel singing to take place,

> it is not enough barely to sing with Grace, but with the Grace of *Melody* that is, so to be filled with the Spirit, as that by his gracious influencing Power, not only the Matter is formed from the Word, and according to the Word of God; but that the Grace of Joy is raised up in our Souls to that height of Melody, as wanteth to be vented forth by the Tongue. For Singing is called a breaking forth.[42]

As reflected in the Maze Pond confession of faith above, true gospel singing was only to be performed as a gift of the Holy Spirit, and any kin of composed song was only a carnal form, which "*is not better than counterfeiting the excellent Gift of the Holy Spirit.*"[43] Keach was eager to spring upon this circumscribed description of singing. While

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[39] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 54, 130.
[40] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 68.
[41] Marlow, *Brief Discourse*, 8 [misprinted as 6].
[42] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms*, 44-45.
[43] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms*, 45.

allowing that the early Church had possessed certain spiritual gifts with respect to singing, he countered that their extraordinary gifts of Prayer, preaching and interpreting the scripture had ceased as well, and such an argument may be used to cast off all ordinances.[44]

While Marlow's references to spiritual singing might seem vague or opaque to many readers, the concept would not have been unprecedented for his immediate audience. In fact, one of Keach's supporters in the printed debates, Hanserd Knollys, had been a strong advocate for the spiritual songs of Katherine Sutton. Sutton had exhibited the "providential sign of spontaneous singing in verse" in 1655. The "most immediate beneficiaries" of her gift were Knollys's congregation, and she apparently fled to the Netherlands along with him and others in 1660.[45] In his preface to Sutton's 1664 publication about her experiences and songs, Knollys cited 1 Corinthians 14:12-15 to explain that the singing of Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs should be performed with the assistance of the Spirit:

> [So] to read a Psalme in a book, and sing it, or to sing the same Psalme without the Book is not to sing in the Spirit: If the singing of Psalmes be a part of Gods worship (as doubtless it is) then it ought to be performed by assistance of the Spirit[46]

Sutton wrote her own account "to testify to all that I received (from the Lord) the gift of singing as well as the gift of prayer."[47] Her writing makes it clear that her prayers and singing were indeed a gift, which occurred when "[I] cast away my prayer-

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[44] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 63-64.
[45] Katherine Sutton, "A Christian Womans Experience of the Glorious Working of Gods Free Grace (1663)" in *A Company of Women Preachers: Baptist Prophetesses in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Curtis W. Freeman (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2011), 588.
[46] Sutton, "A Christian Womans Experience," 594-595. The relevant passages from 1 Corinthians read "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" and "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also," respectively (KJV).
[47] Sutton, "A Christian Womans Experience," 640.

book…and I cried unto the Lord alone to teach me to pray."[48] In her own singing, she was constantly a passive participant upon whom God acts: she described her experiences as ones in which "I was much stirred up" and "I was indued [sic] with the gift." Her songs were delivered to her by an external force: "this song came in (as fast as I could sing)," or later on "I was put upon singing, as followeth."[49] Unlike Keach's hymns, which he wrote with his own human abilities according to pre-established forms and conventions, Sutton's songs came unmediated from the Spirit. She emphatically disavowed any credit for her singing. Indeed, within the space of one hundred words she wrote of herself as "a poor weak worthless worm," "an old fruitless branch," and "a poor empty one": certainly, the songs were not wholly her own.[50]

In contrast to this form of "spiritual singing," Keach emphasized the human art involved in the sort of songs he advocated by comparing it to preaching. Preaching, he wrote, is as much spiritual as is singing, so Marlow's argument may as well be said "to justify the Quakers Silent Meetings…by this way of reasoning, there is no more need of the poor Body to glorify God in his Worship."[51] To redefine such an obviously physical act like song in such a in a way that excluded the body was almost to dismiss the body, and with it any orderly practice in which it could engage. While Marlow had tried to paint Keach as a kind of Pharisee, Keach's counter-attack was to depict his opponent as being on the road to Quakerism. Keach's friend Hanserd Knollys also used this comparison, which offended Marlow to the point of his demanding an apology.[52]

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[48] Sutton, "A Christian Womans Experience," 596-597.
[49] Sutton, "A Christian Womans Experience," 608, 617.
[50] Sutton, "A Christian Womans Experience," 618.
[51] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 14.
[52] Knollys, 4. Marlow, *Truth Soberly Defended*, 3.

Keach's stance on song left him in a position not unlike Puritan proponents of well-written sermons in the earlier part of the seventeenth century. Arnold Hunt has described how, faced with a Laudian emphasis on reading on one side and a radical rejection of penned sermons in favour of extempore prayer on the other, "Puritans responded to these challenges by shifting their ground" and began "adopting what, in other contexts, would be typical conformist arguments about the basic similarity of reading and preaching."[53] If, as was the case in these earlier debates about preaching, the pro-hymn position sounded at times like the arguments for conformity, it is because Keach was trying to stake out a place between the twin threats of Roman Catholics and Quakers. Like the proposed "middle way" of his contemporaries in the Church of England, Keach charted a path that avoided the replacement of scripture with ceremonies and tradition, while at the same time still rejecting extemporaneous worship on the other in favour of that which was, as John Spurr describes the conformist position, "considered, reverent and unanimous."[54] His middle way rejected the use of ordinances that were embroidered with the showy excess of Rome, which in the case of hymn-singing included such things as instrumental music. But the risk of the sensual appeal of sound did not extend so far as to allow the outright rejection of song. To do so would be to dismiss a lawful ordinance and acceptable form of human worship. This was the parallel danger of Quakerism: the outright rejection of law and scripture in favour of anarchical enthusiasm. Of course, Keach's hostility to Quakerism was almost as acute as his opposition to

[53] Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 41-42.
[54] John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 339.

popery: as seen in chapter 2, he viewed both groups and their erroneous attitudes towards ordinances as working jointly to undermine scripture and Protestantism.

When it came to the very nature of singing, Keach pointedly defended the outward form of hymns, and the human art and craft that goes into creating them, against Marlow's contrary internal definition of singing. This defence makes clear that his promotion of singing came not exclusively from biblical ordinance, but also from his conviction that outward forms, fashioned with human skill, are not only unavoidable but in fact essential and beneficial to the worship of God. The main problem for Marlow was that Keach wrote his hymns in advance. This is the "*counterfeiting*" of the Spirit to which he referred. He insisted that "humane Forms of Worship do naturally proceed from a carnal and worldly Spirit" and that some Christians "begin to cast off their first Faith, and turn unto Mens Traditions."[55] At one point, he contended that vocal singing could not be an ordinance because "tuned musical Voice must be fitted to Metrical Matter…and seeing that the Metre…is artificial…it cannot be a moral Duty to all Men."[56] It is, perhaps, the very fact of song as an art form that is most problematic to Marlow. Appropriately, it is the status of human art in and of itself that Keach dealt with in response.

Keach appealed to preaching and prayer in his defence of singing. He did so not to deny that vocal singing had a particular outward quality as being "humane" or "artificial," in Marlow's words, but rather to insist that the humane arts were essential for preaching, prayer, and worship. While Keach admitted Marlow's point that his hymns are composed through craft, and used words that were not in the original scripture, he

[55] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms*, 7.
[56] Marlow, *Truth Soberly Defended*, 9.

responded that the same is true of any sermon that a minister might give. While it is true that writing and singing hymns requires a certain amount of skill and learning, to object to any practice as an art would exclude other duties: "There is, I must tell you, an Art in Speaking…an Art in Preaching; and all young Men, when they begin to take upon them that Work, need instruction how to handle a Doctrine."[57] The basic necessity of art, in Keach's estimation, makes Marlow's entire pretence of a free, artless worship impossible. To make such scruples seem even more ridiculous, he observed that, without humane learning and art in composing new words, there would be no English Bible: "We have none of the words in our own Tongue, which were originally given forth by the Holy Ghost." The suggestion here is that the manipulation and recasting of language in a translation is no different than manipulating words so they may be set to a meter, or written in verse, so that they may be sung, provided that "the same Truth be contained in the Verse as in the Prose."[58]

While Keach never put Marlow's errors down to "'men's endeavours to be removed as far as they can from Rome,'" as did some conformists, his spirited defence of human art and agency in worship tended to place both Marlow and the Quakers in this role.[59] While the works of one champion of conformity, Simon Patrick, warned of the antinomianism of "experimental" nonconforming preachers, his Baptist counterpart was equally wary of the antinomian implications of Quakerism as applied to church ordinances.[60] Perhaps relating to his long experience as a writer of verse and hymns as well as writing sermons for his own ministry and biblical commentaries, Keach had an

[57] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 183.
[58] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 180.
[59] Spurr, *Restoration Church of England*, 305.
[60] Spirr, *Restoration Church of England*, 319.

acute awareness of the fact that the written word, in all forms, must be managed with human art and skill no less demanding than the art of singing. While there is no evidence that he had read earlier debates about preaching such as those mentioned above, his attitude towards craft was certainly in line with William Perkins' 1601 description of the well-penned sermon. Perkins wrote that while scripture was perfect in itself it needed to be explained and applied, "as a loafe of the fines bread is unfit for nourishment till it be quartered and shived out unto us."[61] He embraced, rather than minimized, the importance of human artifice. It was the ubiquity and the usefulness of human forms that Keach's work defended. The written word is art in any genre, and while the arts of man may be used for carnal purposes, as his own writings make perfectly clear that "Grace makes Natural Gifts and Arts to become Spiritual" and "the more Art Men have to express themselves, the more useful, by the Grace of God, they are made to others."[62] In defending his understanding of the Gospel and its ordinances, Keach offered a defence of artistic forms in and of themselves. What he produced in support of his position was an effort to place Baptist attitudes towards human art and scriptural ordinances on the narrow course between popish formality and Quaker lawlessness. But the matter of singing in itself was not the only issue implicated in this debate.

Baptist Women's Voices in Song and Worship

While the very essence of singing was crucial to the breach between Keach and members of his congregation, the matter of who was singing was another vital concern. Specifically, the issue of women singing in worship was a matter of considerable

[61] Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 40.
[62] Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 184.

contention. For Marlow, the manner in which Keach had his hymns sung was against the Gospel Order, particularly its inclusion of female voices. He feigned incredulity at the fact that he could endorse the "Practice of Womens vocal Singing" which he characterized as being "directly against the plain and positive Command of Christ."[63] Marlow's position was not without its scriptural basis, and he quoted 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12, on women keeping silent in church.[64] He went so for as to write, "such as deny the Authority of these Scriptures to forbid Women Singing, do of necessity destroy the Authority of the Word of God."[65] Particularly problematic for him was the fact that women singing would mean that they were playing a role of "Teaching, [or] Admonishing," which is beyond their ken.[66] It is no stretch to say that, in his particular hostility to women teaching and admonishing, Marlow was defending not only the authority of God's word, but also the male stronghold within the congregation.

In his response, Keach compared women's singing to other necessary duties. If not permitted to speak, "they must not be admitted to give an account of their Conversion in the Church…for that Practice is full of Teaching and Instruction": women cannot be full members of the church if they are not permitted to have a voice and give an account of themselves.[67] Of course, in this defense of women's singing, Keach did not deny that there was a scriptural obligation for women to remain silent and submissive according to 1 Corinthians 14:34. Rather, he denied that women were prohibited from speaking when

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[63] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms*, 20.
[64] The passage from Corinthians reads, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." That from Timothy, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (KJV).
[65] Marlow, *Brief Discourse*, 21.
[66] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms,* Appendix, 34.
[67] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 141.

they did so in submission. Paul put no restraint on women in such circumstances, Keach observed: "thus *Peter* questioned *Sapphira* before the Church" (which, of course, would have been a difficult task if she were not permitted to answer). Likewise, he insisted that women are free to sing in praise of God, just as Moses allowed Miriam and other women to sing thanksgiving praises, "for 'tis evident the Apostle layeth no greater restraint upon Women for silence in the Church than the Law put upon them before."[68] Keach was far from giving a defence of women's equality in so far as they might preach or assume a leadership role, but he did maintain that it was important that they be permitted to contribute their voices in worship as a part of the Church.

Marlow's heated rhetoric about destroying the authority of scripture aside, women's singing, and their participation in spiritual life more generally, is significant to Baptist history beyond this immediate, and local, debate. Baptist congregations more broadly were conspicuous in their high representation of female members, and thus issues of women's participation and men's leadership within these churches could become pressing. Observers had taken notice of the number of women among nonconforming sects well before the Civil Wars: Michael R. Watts notes that women had always outnumbered men within the Separatist movement, and Keith Thomas records in his 1965 essay on the topic that during the 1630s, episcopal returns and indulgence documents saw "conventiclers…frequently described as being 'chiefly women,' 'more women than men,' 'most silly women,' and so on."[69] Of Baptists in particular, Thomas observes that eight of the twelve founding members of the Bedford Baptist Church, of which John Bunyan was

[68] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 141.
[69] Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 319; Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects," in *Crisis in Europe, 1560-1660*, ed. Trevor Aston (New York: Basic Books, 1965), 320-21.

a member, were women, and Clive D. Field puts the female membership of Baptist and Congregational churches during the Restoration at 62% and 61% respectively.[70]

Those London area churches for which membership lists remain extant are consistent with these general numbers, exhibiting a preponderance of female members. These lists, which are available for five Baptist churches in and around London, amount to 1,686 members in total between 1667 and 1727.[71] In each of these congregations, women were clearly in the majority, though the size of that majority varied from 54.7% (Glasshouse Yard, c. 1680) to 73.7% (Devonshire Square, 1670).[72] On average, women made up nearly a two-thirds majority in these five churches, and only at Glasshouse Yard were women less than 60% of church members. As one might expect, the high female composition of Baptist churches brought with it some negative commentary and was another target for Baptists' opponents. As is the case with many hostile representations of Baptists, this particular line of attack long preceded the Restoration. Thomas writes that the sectaries' popularity with the "weaker sex" would remain a common jibe in the Civil Wars, of which there are multiple examples from the mid-century.[73]

Watts records several instances of royalist pens expressing dismay at women among the sectaries in the 1640s, quoting anonymous rhymes that "When women preach

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[70] Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects," 321; Clive D. Field, "'Adam and Eve.' Gender in the English Free Church constituency," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Volume 44, Issue 1, 1993, 63-79.
[71] This number excludes the 1667 and 1670 membership lists from Devonshire Square, which reached its highest recorded membership in 1690. There is considerable duplication if the three lists are counted together, and so the number 1,686 includes the totals from the Devonshire Square list of 1690, Glasshouse Yard beginning from 1680, Cripplegate from 1689, Maze Pond from 1696, and Petty France from 1674. Devonshire Square is the only church with a membership list from the 1660s, and Petty France is the only church book whose membership rolls extend into the 1720s: most of these numbers are thus relevant from 1674 to 1700.
[72] Devonshire Square Registry of Members, CLC/179/MS20228/001A, London Metropolitan Archives; Glasshouse Yard: Goswell Street, Angus Library, Oxford; Cripplegate (Turners Hall) Church Book (1689-1723), Angus Library, Oxford; Maze Pond Church Book; Petty France Church Book (1675-1727), CLC/179/MS20228/001B, London Metropolitan Archives.
[73] Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects," 321.

and cobblers pray, the fiends in hell make holiday."[74] Likewise pamphleteers in 1641 pointed at the destructive influence of sectaries on the family: the *Discoverie of Six Women Preachers* saw one Joan Bauford teaching that "husbands who 'crossed their wives' wills might lawfully be forsaken," while the *True Relation of a Company of Brownists, Separatists, and Non-Conformists in Monmouthshire* recounted that sectaries "had 'drawn divers honest men's wives in the night times to frequent their assemblies' and had caused 'many chaste virgins to become harlots and the mothers of bastards.'"[75] Thomas Edwards's *Gangraena* pointed out women preachers and prophetesses as particular markers of disorder amongst the Baptists, and engraver Richard Gaywood (*fl.* 1644–1668) depicted Baptist and Fifth Monarchist Anna Trapnel as a "pretended prophetess" with the Devil speaking to her over her shoulder.[76] Women's participation in nonconformist worship, and the threat that this situation posed to marriage and the family (to say nothing of public decency) were recurring complaints.

Accusations of women's impropriety in Baptist congregations would recur with David Russen's *Fundamentals without a Fountain, or a True Picture of the Anabaptists* in 1704. This book called upon the radical mid-century origins of the Baptists, and asserted "Anabaptists have *She-Prophetesses*…like the *Quakers*." Russen cited specific examples including the (evidently redacted) names of "the Wife of J--- S----d…who is now dead, and the Wife of L. H----d still living," and claimed that they had "exercised their Talents at their Assemblies." Russen's Baptist opponent, Joseph Stennett, called these claims ridiculous, writing, "all that are acquainted with the Anabaptists know, that

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[74] Watts, *Dissenters*, 83.
[75] Watts, *Dissenters*, 81-82.
[76] Curtis W. Freeman, *A Company of Women Preachers: Baptist Prophetesses in Seventeenth-Century England* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2011), 3-7, 371.

they are as much against *Womens Preaching*, as any Church professing Christianity."[77] Evidently, the prospect of women usurping male authority in the church was one to which Baptist polemicists reacted quite negatively. Stennet likewise responded to Russen's accusations of marital and sexual irregularities, which implied polygamy on the part of some Baptists as an inheritance of the sixteenth century. He also depicted Baptists affirming that "those Women sin grievously who lie with their Husbands that are not rebaptized."[78]

Baptists' opponents were always eager to associate them with the radicalism of the Civil Wars, and it bears mentioning that their practice of adult baptism by immersion was also imagined by some to give ample opportunity for licentiousness. The image of Baptist ministers baptizing naked women was used to this effect in Featley's *Dipper Dipt*, and the "titillating vision" of "Naked men [going] into the water with naked women, 'holding them in their arms'" is one which Patricia Crawford surmises "sold well" for anti-Baptist polemicist Robert Bailie.[79] Keach himself seems to have come up against an accusation of such impropriety in Russen's polemic, which will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5.[80] To all these claims of sexual misconduct, Stennett's contemptuous response was to report that "Mr. *R*. has not the face to say, that either *Polygamy* or *Community of Women* is practiced by them publickly; and he confesses *he knows not what is done in private among them*."[81]

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[77] Joseph Stennett, *An Answer to Mr. David Russen's Book, Entitul'd Fundamentals without a Fountain, or a True Picture of the Anabaptists* (London: Printed by D. Brown, S. Crouch, and J. Baker, 1704), 196. Russen's book is no longer extant, but in his point-by-point response, Stennett quoted from it extensively.
[78] Stennett, *An Answer*, 225.
[79] Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England, 1500-1720* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 129.
[80] Stennet, *An Answer*, 139-140.
[81] Stennet, *An Answer*, 225.

With respect to adultery and polygamy, Stennett's defense of the Baptists was doubtlessly well grounded. Patricia Crawford has described Baptists and their counterparts among the nonconformists as being "conservative in their views of family relationships," and the Baptists were likewise conservative in their interpretation and enforcement of sexual morality, if the vigorous discipline recorded in the London area church books is any indication.[82] Congregations made judgements and enacted discipline for various matters, which by no means excluded women's conduct and their family life. Regrettably, the specifics are sometimes lacking, but the congregation at Devonshire Square saw fit to record its admonishments of the "scandalous Behaviour" of Mary Barber over the course of several months.[83] Details are similarly scant in the claims against one Brother Baylie at Devonshire Square for unspecified behaviour with his wife in 1666, or those against a Sister Morris at White's Alley in 1691 for conduct with her husband that was "scandalous to religion."[84] Scandalous behaviour is of course a broad term, and men as well as women were admonished for immorality, drinking, and absence from church, but these sorts of entries do not exactly paint a picture of a community in which women were granted much latitude.

The congregations' complaints are more apparent in other entries, in which they were keen to preserve proper conduct within marriage. While Mary Knowles was excommunicated for bigamy in 1682, most of these domestic affairs were of a more mundane sort.[85] Margaret Hill was "charged with keeping Company with a Parson of the

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[82] Crawford, *Women and Religion in England*, 152.
[83] Devonshire Square (Particular) Baptist Church, CLC/179/MS20228/1A, London Metropolitan Archives, May 1669, records admonishments from September and January
[84] Devonshire Square, 7 November 1666; White's Alley Baptist Church, CLC/186/MS592/1, London Metropolitan Archives, 22 July 1695.
[85] White's Alley, November 1682.

Church of England," which of course might have raised questions as to her conformity (or, nonconformity as the case might be). But rather than questioning her faith, the entry pairs her socializing with the parson with "keeping company with another person, a marryed [sic] man," which was sufficient proof to have her excommunicated.[86] Likewise, parental authority was to be respected, as Mary Dews discovered when she was reprimanded for marrying without her mother's permission.[87] In another case, the behaviour of one Sister Adams leads White's Alley to not only warn her, but to send members to admonish her husband as well. Three months later, the congregation "set her at a distance" for having another man in her husband's house.[88] In 1698, Sarah Kiffin was found guilty of defrauding her husband of 200 pounds, making false accusations against him, and slandering Henry Kiffin (who, in the context, appears to be her brother-in-law).[89] A woman openly disrespecting her husband, then, would not long be tolerated, and in the actual event the claims against her would be judged and recorded exclusively by men.

In spite of this fairly conventional treatment of women by seventeenth-century Baptist congregations, the concern that marriage and the family were under threat was one that Stennett needed to address. Russen's argument here was that, if a wife and mother becomes a Baptist, "*the Family is distracted, she acts contrary to the Faith of her Ancestors, and has renounc'd her Allegiance to Christ and her Duty to her Husband in her Marriage-tye, and teaches her Children to rebel against their Father by her*

[86] Devonshire Square, 24 April 1692.
[87] Devonshire Square, 13 April 1702.
[88] White's Alley, December 1682, March 1683.
[89] Devonshire Square, 4, 9, 16 March 1698.

Example."[90] This concern was by no means isolated to Russen and the Baptists, and Keith Thomas has observed that Anglicans and Presbyterians alike frequently voiced their concerns about female sectaries' disobedience to their husbands and the risk this posed to the family as a whole.[91] To the concern that changing religions could undermine familial ties, Stennett's responded by attacking the conclusion of the argument that family and ancestors should permanently fix a woman's faith: "If the Faith of our Ancestors is a just Rule to us, they were mightily to blame that ever began a Reformation in the World, either among Papists or Pagans."[92] It is to be remarked upon that Stennett did not make any distinction between a man's responsibility to his conscience and a woman's (indeed, he observed that if a wife is not permitted to change her beliefs out of deference to her husband, the same rule would need to apply to all husbands), and given the reality of Baptist churches it would have been difficult for him to take a different position.

Certainly there is little or no basis to the claim that Baptist churches either sought to undermine the traditional familial structure, or had the least objection to patriarchal authority in familial, ecclesiastical, or temporal affairs. Male authority was an assumed reality within Baptist congregations, in which all preaching and all positions involved in the official administration of the church were reserved for men. It was also assumed that men were the heads of their households, which is clearly reflected in the registry of members for William Kiffin's Devonshire Square church. Devonshire Square's list of members is unlike its contemporaries in that it includes more information on its members, including their trade, relations, and other relevant details. While some women were identified by occupations including Midwife, Buttonmaker, Servant, and even

[90] Stennett, *An Answer*, 13.
[91] Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects," 332-333.
[92] Stennett, *An Answer*, 13.

Apothecary in one case, many women are identified as "Widow," as "Brother X's Wife," or "Brother Y's daughter." Women's trade was also frequently specified as "A chandler's wife" of "a shoemaker's wife."[93] The church thus defined most women through their relationship with men, and needless to say the registry nowhere contains an example of a man being identified as "Sister X's husband/son." If this registry is revealing with respect to how women's names are recorded, the numbers and descriptions of some of the female members tell another story.

Simply stated, there are more wives listed in Devonshire Square than there are husbands. Where husbands and wives or parents and children appear in the register, they are listed together in a single row. But many women, though listed as the wives of tradesmen, are listed alone. Thus it is clear that married women must have joined the congregation independently, without their husbands.[94] While similar information about trades is not included in the membership lists of the other London congregations, the sheer discrepancy between men and women in each of them would tend to suggest similar membership rates of married women without their husbands. These numbers suggest two things. The first is that a member's marriage outside of the Baptist church was not a major issue within the congregation. The second is that, regardless of how the situation actually played out within family households, a casual observer may have be forgiven from concluding that the Baptists had little respect for husbands' authority when it came to their wives' spiritual lives.

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[93] Devonshire Square Registry of Members. Of course, it should be noted that a woman's role as the wife of a particular tradesperson could be an occupation unto itself, involved as women inevitably were in the work that went of their households.

[94] Devonshire Square Registry of Members.

Concern over husbands' and men's spiritual authority was one with which Stennett was keen to avoid having Baptists tarred. That same anxiety existed in matters of worship within congregations. It is perhaps ironic that the majority of the group who broke away from the Horselydown church over the issue of singing, in part because of the role it gave to women in the public worship of God, were themselves women. The initial split included nine men and thirteen women from Keach's congregation, and the original signatories to the Maze Pond church's subsequent confession of faith were 45 men and 113 women.[95] Conversely Keach, who had argued in favour of women's participation in communal singing, is recorded in the Maze Pond church book as attempting to supress the dissent of the largely female group. He singled out Mary Leader, the wife of one of the ringleaders, saying, "you have learnt a fine peace of Religion…I am troubled to see you that are but a Babe should pretend to such knowledge above others," before shifting his attention to her husband, Luke Leader, whom he blamed for having "finely dragg'd her up." Keach's assumption, therefore, was that a man must be to blame for the dissent of his wife. Leader himself denied Keach's accusation and objected to his bullying tactics, saying that "he thought he did very Ill to reflect after that manner upon the Sisters and [to] overawe them."[96]

It is easy enough to see the response to the situation in the Horselydown congregation as an exercise of male authority in which women's voices were dismissed. Two additional points ought to be considered on that score: firstly every one of the twenty-one names appended to the Horselydown church's initial decision about the disaffected members belong to men; secondly, following the dispute, the congregation

[95] Maze Pond, 5-6. In 1696 the membership Maze Pond church had grown to 179 women and 100 men, a smaller majority of 64.16% women (listed on pages 9-17).
[96] Maze Pond, 45.

excommunicated the nine men, but not the thirteen women.[97] Not only did men make the decisions, even in dissent against the church women's voices were apparently ignored. All in all, this incident, along with Keach's gendered assumptions, fits Crawford's characterization of dissent: "Ultimately, collective male authority in the sect was substituted for the authority of an individual husband or master. A non-believing husband was not to be obeyed, but wives of believers were to be conventionally good."[98]

The singing controversy was not the first time that a member of Keach's circle had debated the role of women in the church. John Bunyan entered into a similar debate with a London Baptist identified only as "Mr. K" in 1683's *A Case of Conscience Resolved*. The most likely identification of Bunyan's opponent is William Kiffin. While Richard Greaves admits the possibility that Hanserd Knollys or Keach were "Mr. K," and in so doing draws a connection with the later controversy at Horselydown, both he and T.L. Underwood in his edited volume of Bunyan's works, consider Kiffin the more likely candidate. Kiffin had debated Bunyan before over baptism and church membership in 1673-74, and had also been referred to as "Mr. K," albeit sardonically, in Bunyan's reply.[99] The issue at stake in this case was whether women in the congregation ought to "Ordinarily, and by Appointment, to Separate themselves from their Brethren, and so to Assemble to perform some parts of Divine Worship, as Prayer, &c. without their Men."[100] Evidently, women in Bedford had been engaging in such meetings, though

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[97] Maze Pond, 40, 105. This event is also cited in Crawford, 199.
[98] Crawford, *Women and Religion in England*, 152.
[99] Greaves, 480-481; T.L. Underwood ed., *Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, Vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), xliii.
[100] John Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved" in *Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, ed. T.L. Underwood, Vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 292.

Bunyan accounted for their actions as being the fault of male leaders who "whether of a fond respect to some seeming abilities they think is in you for this, or from a perswasion [sic] that you have been better then [sic] themselves in other things, or whether from a preposterous zeal, they have put you upon a work *so much* too heavy for you."[101] Likewise, he blamed Mr. K for having sent his (non-extant) manuscript "for the encouragement of this practice…in Opposition to our peace."[102]

In contrast to the men who Bunyan saw as misleading them and stirring up trouble, the women in question were "So subject to the *Word*…and so willing to let go what by *that* could not be proved a duty."[103] He placed no fault on them, and in fact made a point to praise the women of his congregation for their devotion. He wrote that God "hath often made many of your sex eminent for piety," adding of the women of his congregation in particular that "The love of Women in Spirituals…oft times out-goes that of Men," and "I honour and praise your eminence in vertue; and desire to be provoked by the exceeding piety of any of you."[104] Women's devotion was nowhere questioned, so long as they were properly guided, and any such administration of the church or "to appoint Meetings for divine Worship" was to remain an exclusively male domain. Bunyan's reasoning was that any such calling of meetings "*Is an Act of Power*: which Power resideth in the Elders in particular, or in the Church in General. But never in the Women as considered by themselves." Furthermore, in contrast to the argument of Kiffin that the duty of praising God "was incumbent upon all, in as much as they were all partakers of the Mercie," Bunyan wrote that "They are forbidden to teach, yea to speak in

[101] Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved," 295-96.
[102] Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved," 296.
[103] Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved," 297.
[104] Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved," 295.

the Church of God...because of their inability." He added that "*they are not the Image and Glory of God*, as the Men are…They are placed beneath, and are *called the Glory of the Man*"[105]

Organizationally, then, Bunyan believed that the church ought to keep women from engaging in any exercise of power, or teaching on their own. Not one to lower the stakes of such a discussion, he also cited the prime example of women's frailty from *Genesis*. He pointed out that Satan targeted Eve because "the Woman was the weaker Vessel…[and] the Man was made the Head in Worship." Thus, when Eve "stept out of her place but to speak a good Word for Worship" in her failure she "over-threw, not only (as to that) the reputation of Women for ever, but her Soul, her Husband, and the whole World besides."[106] He went on to associate Kiffin's erroneous position with both popery and mid-century radicalism, denouncing Mr K's weakness "that he should shew that himself is so *Nunnish*," and saying that if he were to believe that women should play such a role "then I should be a Ranter of a Quaker."[107]

This intra-Baptist dispute, like that between Keach and Marlowe, played out along familiar lines. Women's spiritual worth was in no way downplayed: they were depicted as particularly devout, and their path to salvation clear. Women were also cast as being passive and submissive throughout, and, to Bunyan's mind as well as to Marlowe's, they were expected to play appropriate roles within their congregations. Greaves argues that Bunyan intended to address this very topic, of women's appropriate role, in the second part of *Pilgrim's Progress* in 1684. This allegory, which tells the story of Christiana and her children finding their path to salvation under the guidance and protection of Great-

[105] Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved," 303, 298, 306. On this point Bunyan cited 1 Corinthians 11.
[106] Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved," 306.
[107] Bunyan, "A Case of Conscience Resolved," 307, 305.

Heart clearly compliments Bunyan's writing on women's role in his congregation: "*A Case of Conscience Resolved* focused on what women could not do, whereas in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* Bunyan concentrated on showing women what they *can* accomplish, especially if they take advantage of pastoral leadership."[108] Given his dispute with Kiffin about the women in Bedford Bunyan's writing on the proper place of women within the church was likely aimed at addressing issues within his own community. His position is particularly striking when one considers that an important episode in his spiritual autobiography was an encounter with members of the Bedford congregation, where, "in one of the streets of that town, I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door in the Sun, and talking about the things of God."[109] For a man whose first contact with his congregation came through encountering women sitting together talking about God, Bunyan's later hostility to women doing so in a more organized fashion seems odd, and is nowhere addressed in his writing on that topic.

If Bunyan was anything like some of his contemporaries, however, the role that women played in the past of his own congregation may have been precisely the sort of thing he wished to address. Some recent work by Curtis W. Freeman has pointed to the prominent place of women in Baptist churches during the mid-century, and subsequent efforts during the Restoration to push these women out of the picture. Peter Berger sees this process in the light of a "routinization" of religious practice in which "the charismatic energy of the early Baptists that was embodied in women prophetesses eventually subsided and became incorporated into the institutional forms of church

[108] Richard Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 504.
[109] Underwood, *Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, xliii.

life."[110] In the context of the prevailing attitudes both towards women's prominence among the Baptists as well as their perceived radicalism and association with the meaner sorts, it is also easy to see such a shift as an effort to recast themselves in less objectionable ways and to create distance from the radicalism of the mid-century and Civil War.

Women's voices were part and parcel of the Baptists' mid-century experience, and, at times, male pastors had no qualms about recognizing and even promoting those voices. Henry Jessey edited and gave support to Sarah Wright's published account of her conversion and spiritual experiences (which also found enough of an audience to run through six editions between 1647 and 1652), while Elizabeth Poole, then associated with Kiffin's congregation, had enough standing to have been consulted by the Council of Officers at Whitehall in 1648 to provide visions and spiritual guidance.[111] Poole was rejected from the Devonshire Square Church in 1649 "for scandalous evils," however, so her influence seems to have been short lived.[112] As we have seen above, Hanserd Knollys would later give a supportive preface to Katherine Sutton's book of her spiritual experiences and songs in 1663.[113]

If Elizabeth Poole's case indicates that women's voices could run afoul of their congregations and male leadership, a more extensive account of such a confrontation is provided in Anne Wentworth's writings in the Restoration. Wentworth was admonished for her prophecies in 1672, and she was excommunicated from the congregation soon thereafter for refusing to submit to male authority as dictated by church order, for

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[110] Freeman, *Company of Women Preachers*, 39.
[111] Freeman, *Company of Women Preachers*, 22.
[112] Elizabeth Poole, "An Alarum of War" (1649), in Freeman, *Women Preachers*, 266, 279.
[113] Sutton, "A Christian Womans Experience," 592-93.

deserting her husband, and for writing a book of prophesies.[114] In four consecutive publications during the 1670s, she responded to her own excommunication by explicitly taking on the spiritual Babylon of Baptist ministers and male authority. She recounted her abusive marriage, which left her "consumed to skin and bone, a forlorn spectacle to be seen." While Wentworth denounced her unregenerate husband, "as hard a task-master as ever the children of *Israel* were [under]," the male brethren of her congregation "[fell] upon me, and could not bear the truth be spoken of their Brother." Far from acting to redress his abuse, they "charge me with…misbehavior in life and conversion or neglect of my duty to their Brother, in not obeying him from the first day of my marriage."[115]

Wentworth associated this sort of abusive male authority not only with the Baptists' complicity in her own physical abuse, but also with "Idolatry, Hypocrisie, and Formality" and spiritual oppression.[116] She charged the congregation with "Labouring with all your might and strength to force my Conscience, and would make a rape of my Soul, to have it bow down to you."[117] In stark contrast to the worldly authority of Baptist men and her worldly husband Wentworth took her support from Christ as "My heavenly bridegroom." Not unlike Katherine Sutton, Wentworth also makes use of verse and song inspired by the Spirit, concluding that Christ is "Husband of my Soul/Whom I must serve, and keep his Laws/Though proud men would controul [sic]."[118]

The juxtaposition that Wentworth made between the institutional authority of "proud men" within Baptist congregations and the direct relationship that she herself had

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[114] Freeman, *Company of Women Preachers*, 648.
[115] Anne Wentworth, "A True Account of Anne Wentworth's" (1673), in Freeman, *Company of Women Preachers*, 658, 656, 663, 664.
[116] Wentworth, "Revelation of Jesus Christ" (1677), in Freeman, *Company of Women Preachers*, 705.
[117] Wentworth, "True Account," 666.
[118] Wentworth, "A Vindication of Anne Wentworth," in Freeman, *Company of Women Preachers*, 680, 686.

with the Spirit placed male authority on the side of formalism and error. Marlow, in his opposition to women's singing in church, might provide some useful perspective on this topic. While he admitted the existence of prophetesses in the times of the Old Testament, he insisted that there is no mention that they delivered their prophecies "in a Church-ministerial way and order," that is to say, within the ordered structures of the church. Rather, "they were inspired by the holy Ghost, and as occasion offered, so they delivered the Word of God."[119] This explanation reflects role allowed for women like Sutton and Poole during the mid-century, inasmuch as the direct intercession of the Spirit could create a space for female action of an exceptional kind. But in the context of the Restoration and later decades, however, the enthusiasm and irregular practices of Civil War radicalism, much less Quakerism, were just what the Baptists needed to distance themselves from in order to better accommodate themselves and appeal for greater toleration. In this context, the diminishing role of women and the Baptists' Post-Restoration emphasis on their orthodoxy and respectability go hand-in-hand.

Keach also pushed women back from the decision-making process and the realm of debate. His depictions of women in poetry and prose, as we have seen, portrayed them as either objects or objectionable. Sion and the human soul were gendered as female, the better to be appropriately passive and be ravished into salvation by their saviour. The only other role played by women in his works is as a source of temptation associated with Babylon (also, incidentally, depicted as a female character), and sensuality.[120] From this perspective, in spite of his willingness to have women participate in communal worship, it is hardly surprising that he saw Mary Leader's involvement in the split from his church

[119] Marlow, *Prelimited Forms*, 36.
[120] See Chapter 3 for more on this topic.

in a purely passive role. His debates were in the realm of the printed word, in which he uniformly engaged with other male authors. He championed a form of Hymn singing that was at odds with the inspired spiritual singing that gave women like Katherine Sutton a voice.

The role of gender also played out in discussions of financial maintenance for male ministers, as supported by Keach and recorded in subsequent Baptist histories.[121] He made mention of the need for better support for ministers twice in *Breach Repaired*, writing that "Gospel-Ministers ought to have a Gospel-Maintenance…that so they might not be intangled with the Affairs of this Life," and repeated this sentiment later.[122] Though Keach does not seem to have played a large role in it, the Baptist National Assembly also decided to set up a collection within London to supplement poor stipends and to prepare men for ministry with education in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. B.R. White calls this a "sign of the desire to have a ministry which could keep up, academically speaking, with the Congregationalists and Presbyterians."[123] This initiative, too, would place more emphasis on the exclusively male leadership of ministers. The more education and formality that was associated with the Baptists' ministers, the further they were from the unseemly enthusiasm of their church's past, and from the women who had played such a role in shaping it.

Preaching and Teaching: Keach's final decade

One of the most important purposes of Keach's hymns were their pedagogical role, and he often used them cooperatively with his sermons and other writing, in publications, and

[121] Thomas Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 4, 292.
[122] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, v, 164.
[123] White, "Twilight of Puritanism," 323.

during services at his church. Song played an important role in what Andrew Pettegree has called the Reformation's "Culture of Persuasion," which sought to reach out to potential believers by spreading religious messages through various media.[124] The instruction of young people in particular was one of Keach's enduring interests, for which he found attractive verse and romantic, even erotic, themes to be of great use. As previously mentioned, he began his career with an instructional book for children. While he was arrested for this publication, and all copies were burned, his interest in education continued unabated. The frontispiece of his popular *War With the Devil* announced that it was intended for youth instruction in particular, and his collection of hymns, *Spiritual Melody*, was written for the stated purpose of instruction. In such hymns and poetry, the readers' enjoyment was meant to bring with it spiritual messages for instruction and conversion.

Spiritual Melody was based largely on the larger and more expensive *Tropologia*, which Keach had coauthored with Thomas DeLaune. This work provided exposition on a vast number of tropes and metaphorical passages of scripture.[125] Appropriately, most of the hymns in *Spiritual Melody* explain or elaborate on scriptural metaphors (God as a Rock, or a high place, for instance), which lent themselves both to pedagogical and proselytizing ends. Hymns sung in worship provided a form of repetition that would ultimately provide an educational benefit for members of the congregation, especially if

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[124] Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[125] Thomas DeLaune and Benjamin Keach, *Tropologia: A Key to Open Scripture Metaphors* (London: Printed by J.R. and J.D. for French Prosser, 1682). This work contains a first book by De Laune on "Sacred Philology, or, The TROPES in Scripture," while the second and third books by Keach contain explanation of metaphors and allegories from the Bible. The particular attention provided here to the Bible's literary qualities and imagery, which need to be interpreted, along with the expansion of such metaphors in his hymns, may further be seen to indicate the centrality of the humane form to Keach's thinking about scripture and spiritual life.

they followed a sermon on a similar subject. This would not have been unlikely at Horselydown, considering Keach's interest in metaphors both in preaching and in hymn-writing.[126] Beyond this use, Keach explicitly intended certain of his hymns not to be sung, but rather studied privately.[127] Used in these ways, the hymns were primarily pedagogical. In working to both educate and to convert, Keach had particular audiences in mind, and the first group of intended readers for *Spiritual Melody* were parents who could utilize them in teaching their children.[128]

Hymn singing, of course, was also an aspect of the regular routine at Keach's Horselydown, where they were sung after his sermons. Keach's hymns cover all manner of spiritual topics, including ordinances like Baptism and the occasional revisiting of his eschatological topics. Frequently, however, they are concerned with God's various forms; for example, a husbandman, a builder, or a strong tower, which present Him as being the only safe way or security. Keach also emphasized Christ as the mediator of a new covenant and as the surety that will see sinners released from a debtor's prison.[129] One of the more popular metaphors in the hymns is also Christ's role as Prophet, Priest, and King, which, given Keach's Calvinistic bent, is appropriately drawn from Calvin's *Institutes* and from the earlier Particular Baptist confessions of faith (see Chapter 1).[130] Keach's Calvinism in terms of Christ's role in salvation, and the inadequacy of human efforts to accomplish salvation, is prominent in his hymns. This emphasis is appropriate,

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[126] For a sample of Keach's sermons and the frequence of sermons about metaphors, see Benjamin Keach, *A Golden Mine Opened: Or, The Glory of God's Rich Grace Displayed in the Mediator to Believers: and his Direful Wrath against Impenitent Sinners. Containing the Substance of near Forty Sermons Upon several Subjects* (London: Printed by William Marshall, 1694). On the use of repetition after sermons more generally, see Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 72-79.
[127] Keach, *Spiritual Melody*, A3.
[128] Keach, *Spiritual Melody*, A3-A4.
[129] Keach, *Spiritual Melody*, 10, 13, 20, 37, 38.
[130] Keach, *Feast of Fat Things*, 14-18, 59, 71, 78; *Spiritual Melody*, 66-70, 71-74, 164.

as soteriology increasingly became the focus of Keach's published sermons during the 1690s.

The 1690s were Keach's most productive years in publishing the sermons that he gave at Horselydown, and his focus in most of them was on correcting errors in soteriology. In particular, legalism and the creeping threat of Arminian soteriology were a cause for concern, and he preached at length against this danger. From 1691 to 1698, Keach published six works on the topic, and the lengthiest of these – *AGolden Mine Opened* – contained thirty-six sermons. In total, he published fifty-nine sermons in six years, most of which touched on Arminianism. His concern was that, while Satan could not keep power through "open profaneness," the appeal of some kind of works-based salvation was better able to mislead souls and render them "Counterfeit Christians."[131] With a certain ecumenical bent, Keach warned that this error was a danger to all nonconformists: "if they are not truly regenerated and renewed in their Souls; let them be *Presbyterians, Independents*, or *Baptists*, it signifies nothing."[132] In expounding upon the errors of the Arminian position, he compared it to believing that a man is redeemed when still in chains, and in a sermon on Jacob's Ladder (also the topic of one of his hymns), he declared that "We have new *Babel-Builders*, or *Work-mongers* that think to climb up to Heaven by their own Works, by their Faith and sincere Obedience: And others by the *Light within*; which is but a branch of the First-Covenant, or law of God."[133] The Arminian impulse within nonconformity was just another repetition of Old Testament Law, irrelevant in Gospel churches (and Keach was also sure to include the Quakers in

[131] Keach, *The Counterfeit Christian; Or, the Danger of Hypocrisy: Opened in Two Sermons* (London: Printed and sold by John Pike, 1691), 4.
[132] Keach, *Counterfeit Christian*, 15.
[133] Keach, *Golden Mine,* 246. Keach, *Feast of Fat Things*, 78; Keach, *Christ Alone*, 27.

his denunciation, if only briefly).

Keach admitted to having committed such follies in the past: "when I was Young, I had from some Men of corrupt Principles sucked in," and disavowed his first book because of the Arminian errors in it.[134] In the 1690s, repudiating the mistakes of his past, Keach preached to demonstrate that Christ alone acts as mediator and brings about the completion of the covenant between God and man.[135] This belief he associates not only with his own confession or with nonconformity, but rather he claims that "all sound Protestants…affirm, That Jesus Christ as the Head, Surety, and Representative of all the Elect, did fulfill or satisfy for the Law of Works, bearing the Curst of the Law for us."[136] Any other position is a clear divergence from Protestant orthodoxy, and shows an ignorance of the central role of Christ. Much like in his hymns, Keach's sermons note the many roles played by God to underline this point: "*he is the Author and Finisher of our Faith*…our Head, our Mediator, our Priest, our King, out Prophet, our Surety, our Shepherd, our Captain."[137] Keach returned on more than one occasion to the point that Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King, plays the role of Jacob's Ladder, and is the only means of salvation.[138]

Keah's thirty-six sermons in *A Golden Mine Opened*, published in 1694, are indicative of a sustained preoccupation with the issue of God's free grace that would have been clear in Keach's preaching at Horselydown. While the publication is divided into

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[134] Keach, *Golden Mine,* 315. The "first book" to which Keach referred is most likely the primer for children, published in 1664, of which no copies survive.
[135] Benjamin Keach, *The Everlasting Covenant, A Sweet Cordial for a drooping Soul; Or, The Excellent Nature of the Covenant of Grace Opened: In a Sermon Preached January the 29th, At the Funeral of Mr. Henry Forty, Late Pastor of a Church of Christ, at Abingdon in the County of Berks* (London: Printed for H. Barnard, 1693), 17.
[136] Keach, *Golden Mine*, 95.
[137] Keach, *Everlasting Covenant*, 25.
[138] Keach, *Christ Alone*, 41-49.

different sections, the individual sections contain series of sermons that build off of one another, often beginning with a reference to what Keach had been saying "the last day." Thus, we can imagine that in his pastoral capacity, he would develop particular themes and metaphors over the course of several weeks. The reason for such a sustained interest in the topic was another controversy within nonconformity. The initial controversy had been occasioned by the evangelical campaign of Richard Davis, which brought about accusations of Antinomianism. The aged Richard Baxter, little more than a year before his death, gave a forceful response to these accusations, and the threat of Antinomianism, in *Scripture Gospel Defended* (1690). In this work, Baxter exclaimed that if Antinomians "prevail to make England believe that elect wicked infidels are as righteous as Christ…and that it is impossible that any sin should hurt them…I should have more hope of the Turks and heathens, than of the land that receiveth and practiseth these principles."[139]

There were a number of published replies to Baxter, and to Davis, who wrote his own response to charges against him. Much of the criticism against Antinomian errors was directed against the posthumously republished works of Tobias Crisp. Nonetheless, it was Baxter that Keach focused on, and he applied the name of "Baxterians" to all of those he saw as slipping into the Arminian error.[140] He anticipated that the "Baxterian Party" would call him "an Antinomian, for that hath been their Artificice of late, to expose the True Ancient Protestant Doctine about Justification," though no direct

[139] Watts, *Dissenters*, 294.
[140] Watts, *Dissenters,* 293-296; Austin Walker, *The Excellent Benjamin Keach* (Dundas, Ontario: Joshua Press, 2004), 335, 343.

response to him was published.[141] Unlike Keach, Hanserd Knollys became tied up in the publication of Crisp's sermons because he was one of the divines who certified their accuracy, and Baxter attacked him for his involvement during a sermon in Pinners Hall in January 1690.[142] But while Knollys was implicated in the debate, and Keach made his attacks on Baxter, they were minor figures in a conflict that caused divisions among Presbyterians between the supporters and detractors of Baxter. By 1695, the controversy had played a role in breaking up the "Happy Union" and putting an end to the common fund organized between Presbyterians and Congregationalists in London.[143]

The Presbyterian example may have made Keach wary of potential splits in the Particular Baptist community, but his sermons express greater concern with the effects that such erroneous beliefs might have on the spiritual well being of his congregants. In one sermon he pointed out the risk posed by such controversies by recounting the fate of John Childs, a former Baptist whose increasing doubts brought him to the depths of despair and, finally, to suicide. John Child had, in Keach's words, "abused the People falsely called *Anabaptists*," and had also run up against John Bunyan.[144] In his final days, Child had come to Keach and to other ministers for guidance, but to no avail.[145] In Keach's account, at any rate, the issue of Arminianism had been one of the main contributors to Child's despair. Being an Arminian, Keach wrote, he had wrongly thought that "I could have dived to the bottom of it by my parts, but I see I cannot…I am broken

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[141] Benjamin Keach, *The Display of Glorious Grace: Or, the Covenant of Peace, opened in Fourteen Sermons Lately Preached, In which the Errors of the present Day, about Reconciliation and Justification, are Detected* (London: Printed for S. Bridge, sold by Mary Fabian, Joseph Collier, and William Marshall, 1698), v.
[142] Barry H. Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions: The Question of Orthodoxy Regarding the Theology of Hanserd Knollys*, (Leiden-Boston-Koln: Brill, 2001), 84.
[143] Watts, 293-296. White, "Twilight of Puritanism," 328.
[144] Keach, *Counterfeit Christian*, 52-53; Greaves, *Bunyan*, 517-518.
[145] Greaves, *Bunyan*, 517-518. The other ministers that Child spoke to and exchanged letters with included Hercules Collins, minister at Wapping, Bunyan himself, Henry Danvers, and Edward Man.

in Judgement." Despite the best efforts of Keach and others, he could not see himself out of his despair because he still did not believe that Christ could, or would, save him: "he cannot Mediate for me, I have so much offended him, in maliciously abusing of his People."[146]

Corrosive though Arminian beliefs were, Keach was also keen to avoid the suggestion of Antinomianism. Rather than giving into the Antinomian impulse, he insisted for those that would be saved "*to make their Calling and Election sure*," adding that "they are under strong Delusion, who suppose Election only refers to the End, and not to the Means."[147] In other words, while moral conduct cannot bring salvation, it does not imply that moral conduct is not indicative of salvation. Keach further addressed his position between Arminian and Antinomian errors in a publication called *Medium Betwixt to Extremes*, published in 1698. To some extent, Keach held out hope that Antinomians as such did not exist, and those called by that name were only making misstatements. He added, "I hope it is so" that the only difference is of "Words or Terms," but nonetheless he felt it was appropriate to address the concern.[148] In this publication, he made a distinction between gaining salvation through Christ, which is sound Christian belief, and an Antinomian belief in a freedom from sin:

> The Apostle doth not say, there is no Sin in them which are in Christ Jesus, nor any thing worthy or Condemnation: Nor doth he say, there is no Affliction, no Correction, no fatherly Chastisements to them which are in Christ; but there is no Condemnation[149]

Having set his audience straight about Arminianism, he subsequently addressed the follies of Antinomianism as well. As was the case in his debate with Marlow, positioning

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[146] Keach, *Golden Mine*, 51.
[147] Keach, *Golden Mine*, 295. Italicized portion is from 2 Peter 1:10 (KJV).
[148] Benjamin Keach, *A Medium Betwixt two Extremes. Wherein it is proved that the whole First Adam was condemned, and the whole Second Adam justified* (London: Printed for Andrew Bell, 1698) iv.
[149] Keach, *Medium Betwixt two Extremes*, 8.

himself between popish carnality on the one hand and radicalism of Quakers on the other, Keach's sermons placed the Particular Baptists between the Scylla and Charybdis of Arminian and Antinomian errors.

Conclusion: Final Controversies

Near the end of his life, Keach published works against the Seventh Day Sabbath and the Baptists who practiced it. This would be his final contribution to debates over ordinances. In *The Jewish Sabbath Abrogated*, published in 1700, he took on the topic. As the title indicates, his position was that holding the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath was nothing more than a revival of Jewish Law to which he had been so long opposed. He compared the Seventh Day Sabbath to circumcision, as being only "a Type or Shadow of that true Spiritual Rest we enter into under the new Covenant," and as such done away with under Christianity.[150] On this point, Keach even pointed to some Seventh Day practitioners writing about a renewal of circumcision as well.[151] While the seventh day Sabbath is only a shadow from the Jewish law, Keach cited a number of incidents of Providence punishing those who ignored the observance of the Lord's Day on Sundays; punishments which included scaffolds falling and killing eight in Paris Garden at a bear-baiting, and Stratford-on-Avon being almost burned down for "profaning the Lord's Day."[152] As opposed to Mosaic Law, the Lord's Day was justified because "This Day our Redemption was finished" and "On This Day the *Typical Sabbath* was ceased, and all

[150] Benjamin Keach, *The Jewish Sabbath Abrogated: Or, the Saturday Sabbatarians confuted. In Two Parts. First, Proving the Abrogation of the Old Seventh Day Sabbath. Secondly, That the Lord's Day is of Divine Appointment* (London: Printed and Sold by William Marshall, 1700), 102.
[151] James Barry Vaughn, "Public Worship and Practical Theology in the Work of Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)" (PhD diss., St. Andrews University, 1989), 79.
[152] Keach, *Jewish Sabbath*, 258-59.

Shadows of the Law vanquished."[153]

While Keach was strongly opposed to the practice, James Barry Vaughn, who deals with Keach's writing on this topic at some length, observes that "He did not believe that those who kept the seventh day should be censured, provided they kept the first day as well," and also provided that they neither wronged their families nor violated moral duties. In fact, Vaughn points out that Joseph Stennet, with whom Keach remained on good terms and who gave an address at his funeral, was a Seventh Day Baptist.[154] Keach's concern seems to have been less to repudiate those who held these beliefs, but rather to keep more Baptists from following their example. His preface refers to "one Person [male] especially under my charge…who had for some considerable time, unknown to me, suck'd in the Notion of the *Jewish Sabbath*, and laboured to corrupt many others of the younger sort," which would have posed a problem within his congregation.[155] Though he made no mention of it in writing, one of Keach's daughters had also joined with the Seventh Day Baptists in the Francis Bamfield Congregation in 1696, and was eventually excluded from that church for attending a Quaker meeting.[156] Keach may well have worried that others might follow a similar path to error.

Through much of his final fifteen years, then, Keach was occupied with maintaining the orthodoxy of Particular Baptists' faith. He tried to set matters straight in terms of hymn-singing, which fell on the issue of spiritual ordinances more generally, as well as women's role in performing them. He then engaged in a lengthy repudiation of errors in soteriology, trying in effect to chart the proper course between Arminianism and

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[153] Keach, *Jewish Sabbath*, 265.
[154] Vaughn, "Public Worship and Practical Theology," 82-83.
[155] Keach, *Jewish Sabbath*, iii.
[156] Walker, *Benjamin Keach*, 230. This incident is recorded in the copy of the church book held in Dr Williams Library, though Keach makes no mention of it himself.

Antinomianism. It is no surprise, then, that he would begin the eighteenth century by correcting yet another example of foolish adherence to the Law. Appropriately, given his concern with maintaining sound doctrine within his church, his commentary on the Seventh Day Sabbath was delivered in the form of sermons. One of his last publications would be a revised version of the children's primer that he had first been charged for writing in 1664, and in 1704, forty years after that first publication, Keach died. In a lifetime largely spent in polemic and controversy against Quakers, conformity, and persecution, he had spent the last stages of his career more frequently debating and correcting his own coreligionists.

Keach's confrontations with his contemporaries may be set in a broader context of internal debate among nonconformists in the 1690s. The controversy over free grace was one, and that over hymns and ordinances another, with which Keach was particularly concerned. Baxter's final controversy, as we have seen, caused great distress between Presbyterians and Congregationalists. At the same time, the General Baptists had a considerable falling out among themselves over Christology. They owed that particular controversy to accusations against Matthew Caffyn regarding the humanity and divinity of Christ, which saw many line up on either side of the debate.[157] Keach, caught up as he was in correcting errors of a completely different sort, made no mention of the dispute among his General Baptist cousins.

Aside from the Maze Pond split, the issues of the 1690s occasioned no great internal schisms between the Particular Baptists in London, though that is not to say that the issues that they argued over were not taken seriously. Having gained security in their day-to-day existence, it appears that dissent quickly turned inward to better define and

[157] Watts, *Dissenters*, 300.

enforce a sense of orthodoxy. In the case of Keach, Marlow, and the members of the Maze Pond Church, they defined themselves more narrowly by splitting over matters of ordinances and worship. At the same time, Keach became increasingly involved in confronting what he saw as an erosion of the basic Calvinistic principles of his faith. While the flexibility of Baptists' identities, and the occasional distancing of themselves from their mid-century origins, had been a valuable tactic under persecution, it could also pose a threat to unity and to the coherence of that confessional identity. Addressing that concern was Keach's preoccupation in the late stages of his career.

Chapter 5: Martyrdom and Baptist Histories

Benjamin Keach died in 1704, but the basic components of the Baptist identity that he articulated retained their relevance in the following decades. This chapter will largely deal with one area where his influence was felt well after his death, namely the writing of Baptist history in the early eighteenth century. Given that the most significant contribution to Baptist history in this period was the work of Keach's son in law Thomas Crosby, there is a clear connection to be made. Crosby's *History of the English Baptists* reflected the basic emphasis on persecution, influenced by John Foxe, and the defensive posture of Protestant orthodoxy that had inhabited Keach's works. For Crosby, as for Keach and other Baptists before him, their confessional history played an integral role in articulating a sense of Baptist identity.

Ever since the sixteenth century, Protestants of various stripes were faced with a disarmingly simple question: "where was your church before Luther?"[1] The origins and history of a religious confession were crucial to both its sense of legitimacy and its identity more generally. While Keach and his coreligionists were clear about their desire to form and reform their churches according to the model of the apostles and the Pauline epistles, the fact that their own communities had originated quite recently needed to be accounted for and dealt with. Where did the Baptists come from? What had their predecessors done before the Restoration saw Keach's career begin, and what legacy had the early Baptists in England and elsewhere left to their successors? These were fundamental questions, and even if Baptists did not want to deal with them their opponents left them with little choice.

The classic hostile account of Baptists' history came, not unexpectedly, from

[1] S.J. Barnett, "Where was your Church before Luther? Claims for the Antiquity of Protestantism Examined," *Church History*, 68 (March 1999): 14.

Daniel Featley in *The Dippers Dipt* (1646). Here Featley included a plate that listed the "severall Sorts of Anabaptists," containing names like Adamite, Catharist, Huttite, Melchiorite and Menonist.[2] Erroneous Baptists, then, had their origins in the heretics of the early and medieval church, as well as in the enthusiastic radicals of the German reformation. But while heretics from long ago like the Adamites and Cathars provided one origin story of the Baptists, it was the rebels of the sixteenth century that provided Featley with his more potent anti-Baptist material. He gave an account of Thomas Müntzer leading peasants in revolt, and of Jan of Leiden's apocalyptic dreaming and subsequent slaughter in the Anabaptist Kingdom of Münster, as the English Baptists' genuine history.[3] In Featley's subsequent *A Warning for England, Especially for London: In the famous History of the Frantick Anabaptists*, Müntzer once again marked the beginning of the sect's radical history: "He taught a community of all goods to be most agreeable to nature, and that all Free-men ought to be equall in dignity and condition."[4] Featley pointed out this history of violence and rebellion as a warning, because while he admitted that "our Anabaptists in *England*, were never arraigned or condemned for any such crimes," the English still needed to be on guard: "let us take heed how we suffer the egges of the Cockatrice to remaine amongst us; for when they be hatched, there will breake out of them most venomous serpents."[5]

The association of "Anabaptists" in England with their 16th century namesakes would continue well after Featley. In 1660, Richard Blome's *Fanatick history* presented a

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[2] Daniel Featley, *The Dippers Dipt* (London: Nicholas Bourn and Richard Royston, 1646), 19.
[3] Featley, *Dippers Dipt*, 125-27.
[4] Daniel Featley, *A Warning for England, Especially for London: In The famous History of the Frantick Anababtists. Their wild Preachings and Practices in Germany. Whereunto is added, remarkable Histories of the Anabaptists, with observations thereunto* (London: Printed by M.F. for Richard Royston, 1647), 220.
[5] Featley, *A Warning For England*, 250.

history of the Baptists and the Quakers. Blome placed Baptists' origins in the Reformation, but argued that their beginnings "must not be ascribed to the nature of the Truth, but to the indisposition of the several subjects not capable to receive it." While the Reformation opened a door to truth, in the persons of the Anabaptists "whose judgement is all passion," truth only "fills them with a wild-fire zeal, and that precious liquour turns into vinegar being poured into such unclean vessels."[6] Blome placed the Baptists in the context of Reformation Anabaptism, but divorced those origins from the genuine Reformation of Luther and Calvin. The Baptists' predecessors were people unfit for the Truth, being rather a "numerous rabble of seditious people" in which "not one was found that ever was a Schollar."[7] The lowly status of early Anabaptists was also represented in Jan of Leiden, the "Taylor King" of Münster, and in Thomas Müntzer's leadership of the peasants, whose nature was to be won over by sedition.[8] Blome further disassociated the Reformers from the Anabaptists because "they hated *Luther* worse than the…pope, and troubled the Evangeliques more than the Papists."[9]

Rebellious associations also recurred in an anonymous ballad aimed at the Baptist printer Francis Smith in 1681, titled *The Leacherous Anabaptist*. This piece described him as "This Protestant News-Monger, and *Munster* Imp."[10] It further indicated Baptists' guilt, not only by association to the previous century, but with the mid-seventeenth century as well. Blome connected Müntzer and the Peasants' War with the Levellers of the English Civil Wars, while *The Leacherous Anabaptist* was addressed to "*Roundheads*

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[6] Richard Blome, *The Fanatick history: or An Exact Relation and Account of The Old Anabaptists, and New Quakers* (London: Printed for J. Sims, 1660), 2.
[7] Blome, *The Fanatick History*, 17.
[8] Blome, *The Fanatick History*, 33, 13.
[9] Blome, *The Fanatick History*, 5.
[10] Anon, *The Leacherous Anabaptist* (London: Benjamin Harris, 1681), 2.

and *Whiggs*."[11] Polemic and partisan attacks placed Baptists in the context of Reformation radicalism and of Civil War rebellion, as a company or millenarians and regicides. This perception of the origins of the English Baptists was such that even a more sympathetic writer like Daniel Neal, in his *History of the Puritans*, would say that republicans and Levellers in the New Model Army were "chiefly *Anabaptists*," though he did admit that Baptists principles were not inconsistent with Monarchy.[12]

Faced with such sinister associations, Baptists in the early Restoration sought to address the concerns of their suspicious contemporaries. The *Humble Apology* of 1660, of which William Kiffin was the primary author and Francis Smith the seller, admitted some of the darkness of Anabaptist history, namely the excesses of Münster, but insisted that many German Anabaptists opposed such rebellious behaviour. The apologists regretted that the memory of such events meant that some "hath frequently, though unduely, [sic] imputed the like impious opinions, designs and intentions unto all that are called by that name; although their souls abhor the very memory of such impious doctrines, and their bloody consequences."[13] The connection was not one that the *Apology* could effectively deny, though it did seek to put an appropriate amount of distance between belief in Believer's Baptism and the other practices of the early Anabaptists.

The hostile depictions of Baptists to which such publications like the *Humble Apology* responded fall more or less in line with the tactics of Thomas Edwards in *Gangraena*. Edwards repeatedly associated contemporary sectarian controversies with both the Reformation and with the heretics of the early and medieval church. Baptists

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[11] Blome, *The Fanatick History*, 9. *Leacherous Anabaptist*, 1.
[12] Daniel Neal, *The History of the Puritans or Protestant Non-Conformists*, Vol. 3 (London: Printed for Richard Hett, at the Bible and Crown, 1736), 147.
[13] William Kiffin, *The Humble Apology Of some commonly called Anabaptists, In behalf of themselves and others of the same Judgement with them* (London: Printed by Henry Hill, sold by Francis Smith, 1660), 6-7.

featured in Edwards' work, and Anne Hughes observes that he "frequently referred to Zwingli's and Bullinger's writings and disputations against the Anabaptists."[14] The appeal to Reformation and Church history provided Edwards parallels with which he could slur the nonconformity of the mid-century. The heresies of the past were transmuted into the errors of the present: Augustine's old opponents in Africa, the Donatists, became the Independents of the Civil Wars, and "the tags of libertine or anabaptist conjured up the indiscriminate excesses of reformation radicals."[15] The ability to draw connections between sects of various times and places through similar doctrines, whether the sect-type organization of the Donatists and Independents, or the belief in adult baptism shared by English Baptists and 16th century Anabaptists, provided one stick with which to beat heterodoxy. Such parallels saddled Baptists with the past excesses of related groups. They were a part of Protestant history, to be sure, but had always been on the wrong side of history. The logical conclusion of Edwards's work was that these parallels "provided legitimation for Edwards [as well]. If the Independents were Donatists then Edwards was Augustine."[16]

Needless to say, placing oneself on the right side of history and its various theological and political debates was a helpful narrative for religious apologists and polemicists to present, and Edwards was hardly the first to do it. Moreover, comparison of competing groups to past heresies was a well-established tactic ever since the Reformation. Euan Cameron writes that Rome considered all Protestant errors to be repetitions of old heresies, exemplified in the 16th century *summae* of heresy. Johannes

[14] Anne Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 72.
[15] Hughes, *Gangraena*, 76.
[16] Hughes, *Gangraena*, 104.

Eck accused Luther himself of Hussite errors in 1519, while Luther wrote in 1521:"I shall be condemned…and called a Waldensian and a Wycliffite."[17] While Roman Catholics may have expected this identification of old errors to be an effective repudiation of the Reformers, it spectacularly backfired. As Cameron puts it "the Protestants looked again at the older heretics and saw in them, with progressively greater certainty, a foreshadowing of their own mission. Thus the 'heretics' did not drag the Reformers down; the Reformers dragged the heretics up." This process of reclaiming medieval heretics, he adds, "imbued the Reformation with a sense of its continuity and tradition no less potent than its sense of renewal."[18] It was the Protestant martyrologies that provided this sense of continuity, most notably John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, which became the gold standard of English Protestantism in the 17th century. And while the Protestants of the 16th century found their heroic forefathers in the history of medieval Christianity, Baptists were eager to find themselves within the history of Protestant martyrology.

Keach, Restoration nonconformity, and the Foxeian Tradition

Published in 1563, Foxe's *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, Touching Matters of the Church* was the exemplary case of Protestant martyrology in English. Much has been written about Foxe's work, and no attempt will be made here to replicate that scholarship. To state the matter simply, Foxe worked to make the whole narrative of history comprehensible to an English audience; in the words of William Haller, to "rewrite the history of the Church from an English point of view fitted to

[17] Euan Cameron, "Medieval Heretics as Protestant Martyrs," in *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Published for the Ecclesiastical History Society by Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 187.
[18] Cameron, "Medieval Heretics as Protestant Martyrs," 190.

present circumstances."[19] The present circumstances in 1563 included the aftermath of Mary I's execution of Protestant martyrs, and Foxe placed these events within the history of Christian martyrs. He presented the origins of Protestantism in England in such a way as to demonstrate that the English church was "not the beginning of any new church of our own' but 'the renewing of the old ancient church of Christ.'"[20]

Foxe identified the year 1000 as the point at which "Satan broke loose," ended his slumber, and corrupted the Roman Catholic Church.[21] The Church of Rome being an Antichristian church, Foxe traced the history of the true church through the centuries. He found the origins of Protestant beliefs on matters such as worship, the authority of the Bible, and on religious orders, all well represented among medieval heretics. He pointed to the Waldensians, that same group that Luther expected to be associated with, to prove that "this doctrine nowe preached and taught in the Churche, is no new Doctrine, which here we see bothe taught & persecuted almost 400 yeares ago."[22] Foxe also held up the Albigensians of the thirteenth century as forbearers of Protestantism for their opposition to the Pope and to the superstitions of Rome.[23] Jan Hus and the Hussites of Bohemia were also commemorated in Foxe, but given the book's Anglo-centric agenda, it is the English reformer John Wycliffe who has pride of place. Wycliffe's career was described at some length: his opposition to the superstition of Roman ordinances and his defiance of the authority of the pope provide a model both for Jan Hus, as well as for the Reformation.[24]

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[19] William Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), 134.
[20] Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, 136.
[21] John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments of these latter perilous dayes* (London: Printed by John Day, 1563), 1-9.
[22] Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, 45.
[23] Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, 72
[24] Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, 86-108, 209-211, 248-260.

Taken as a whole, these groups "represented sturdy proto-Protestant hostility to Rome" and were adopted as part of English Protestantism's history.[25]

The basic narrative of Foxe's martyrology was that of a true church that endured ages of Antichristian oppression. Appropriately, then, Protestant writers in England were attracted to recounting the excesses of Roman tyranny against their coreligionists past and present as a means of situating themselves and their coreligionists in the continuing contest against Roman Catholicism. John Marshall writes about the enduring interest in the topic during the Restoration. In the 1680s, Gilbert Burnett's *History of the Persecution in the Valleys of Piedmont* and Pierre Jurieu's *Accomplishment of the Scripture Prophecies* focused attention on the "barbarous enormities" suffered by the Waldensians, the latter work identifying the massacres with an apocalyptic final persecution.[26] The Waldensians, in particular, were given significant attention due to their "central place in Protestant accounts of their ancestry as the sole 'visible' church preserving the apostolic faith against its Roman Catholic 'perversion' in the Middle Ages," and were the subject of a national campaign in England and Ireland after a 1655 massacre that captured the attention of both Oliver Cromwell and John Milton.[27] Other foreign Protestants, such as the Huguenots in France, were also the subject of sustained attention from the Earl of Shaftesbury and others who made common cause between English Protestantism and their "little sister without breasts" against the "Absolute Monarchy" of Catholic France.[28] In short, the basic Foxeian narrative maintained its

[25] Barnett, "Where was your church before Luther," 18
[26] John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration, and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 56-57.
[27] Marshall, *John Locke*, 57, 58-60.
[28] Marshall, *John Locke*, 32, 46-47.

appeal in the Restoration, as writers continued to see the threat of persecution by Roman Catholics as a defining feature of their religion.

This understanding of Protestantism, defined by its persecution by the Roman Antichrist, which was well entrenched as in English martyrology, had a clear influence on Benjamin Keach. Writings throughout his career indicate that he saw himself and his contemporaries as part of that historical narrative, beginning with his earliest surviving publication. In *Zion in Distress*, published in 1666, Keach represented the Church through the figure of Zion, depicted as the woman hiding in the wilderness from Revelation 12:6, and recounts her suffering through the massacres of the Waldensians as well as the killing of Protestants in Germany, France, and other parts of Europe.[29] In 1675, his "Dialogue between an old Apostate and young Professor" confronted the Popish apostate with a more sustained account of the historical terrors of Rome ever since the days of the Apostles. Keach's mouthpiece, the Professor, explained that it was popish policy, "To poison Kings, or Rulers of those Nations/Who were profane or turned Hereticks," which he contrasted with Christ's lessons, saying "I never read that he made Laws to burn/Such as were Hereticks, or would not turn" nor "much less Murder those/Who did in Truth Idolatry oppose."[30] His depiction of Rome made clear allusion to the narratives of Foxe's Martyrs, including the poisoned King John, whose death as an opponent to Rome also featured in Foxe. He went on to cite the persecution of Protestants by "Prefidious France," the violence of Jesuit plotters in England, France, and Spain, the

[29] Benjamin Keach, *Zion in Distress* (London: 1666), 21, 26-27.
[30] Keach, "An Appendix: Containing a Dialogue between an old Apostate and young Professor," in *War with the Devil or, The Young man's conflict with the powers of darkness In a dialogue* (London: Printed and sold by Benjamin Harris, 1675), 144-147.

slaughter of Protestants in Ireland during the 1640s, as well as, appropriately, "The poor religious *Waldenses*."[31]

Keach returned to this historical narrative of Protestant persecution and anti-popery repeatedly. His Restoration poetry was keen to situate England's present within both the immediate conflict and the *longue durée* of Reformation martyrology. His updated and expanded version of *Zion in Distress* (now spelt "*Sion*") published in 1681, featured a climactic criminal case against Babylonish Rome. Here the witnesses for the prosecution began with "*Waldenses. Albigenses.* Protestants of *Piedmont*. *Savoy*, &c." who testified that Babylon "*Has follow'd us with a perpetual War*," describing gruesomely "the dismal Year of *Fifty Five*" in Savoy, "Where thirty Thousand Souls she did destroy."[32] Similar witnesses included Bohemia, Germany, and Poland, who cited the martyrdom of "That worthy Man *John Huss*" who was "burn'd to *death*/For owning of the *Apostolick Faith*," while France provided testimony of the French Wars of Religion and of the Huguenots "Butcher'd in the *Parisian* Massacre," namely Saint Bartholomew's Day.[33] Of course, and altogether in keeping with the Anglo-centric narrative of Foxe, Keach saved the final testimony for England. It was England that he presented as the chief target of Roman aggression and plotting, from powder plots and poisons to Marian martyrs, to the Armada, and finally "swarms of Locusts Priests and Friers."[34]

In keeping with England's central role in Foxe's history, Keach saw the specter of the Marian persecutions returning with the Popish Plot and the subsequent Tory Reaction

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[31] Keach, "An Appendix," 165, 167-70.
[32] Keach, *Sion in Distress: Or, the Groans of the Protestant Church* (London: Printed by George Larkin for Enoch Prosser, 1681) 92-93.
[33] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 94-95.
[34] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 100-101.

under Charles II. As we have seen in Chapter 3, Charles's policy in the months and years after the Oxford Parliament, strengthening the hand of his supporters against the Whig exclusionists, is not directly referenced in Keach's works, but provided helpful context for Keach's sentiments in 1681. Marshall has described that very year as one in which Dissenters understandably saw the government as "taking to new levels the long partial administration of law," which readily fit into the narrative of the Restoration Regime "abrogating fundamental laws."[35] Keach's *Sion in Distress* was consistent with these sentiments, as he warned about recent attempts to "undermine/Our Ancient *Laws*, subvert *Religion*, and/Bow *England*'s Neck to the *Antichrists* command" as prelude to a broader antichristian design in which "martyr'd heaps in flaming *Smithfield* [will] burn."[36] Keach used the image of Smithfield, the execution site of the Marian martyrs who feature so prominently in *Actes and Monuments*, on more than one indication as a historic reference point. Further into *Sion in Distress*, he presented the reader again with "*Smithfield*, belch[ing] out *Fire* and *Smoke*," the execution site evidently appealing to his sense of historical context.[37]

Likewise, in *Antichrist Stormed*, Keach accounted for the "great Mass of Blood of Saints" that Rome spilled, and mentioned in particular martyred Waldensians and Albigensians, and the massacres of Piedmont in the 1650s.[38] Clearly, his eschatology and anti-popery were well enmeshed with a historical perspective that owed much to Foxe's martyrology. The upshot of adopting this historical narrative to voice his own

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[35] Marshall, *John Locke*, 122. The Tory Reaction of 1681-1685, as it was experienced in England, is given a detailed account in Tim Harris's *Restoration*, pages 260-328. The "Drive Against Dissent" and the effects felt by nonconformists during this time is dealt with on pages 300-309.
[36] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 4-5.
[37] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 40.
[38] Benjamin Keach, *Antichrist Stormed: Or, Mystery Babylon the great Whore, and great City, proved to be the present Church of Rome. Wherein all Objections are fully answered* (London: Printed for Nathaniel Crouch, 1689), 88-97.

condemnations of Rome, and to give his own interpretations of scripture, was also to implicate himself and his coreligionists in the accepted history of English Protestantism. The association of nonconformity with Protestant targets of Popish oppression past and present recurs in Keach's arguments about Rome's identity as the Antichrist. While Rome depicted itself as a Shepherd forgiving sins, he wrote that it was in fact a beast preying on and persecuting Christians and drinking the blood of the Saints. Keach rhetorically asked of Rome's heresy, "Came these unparallel'd Degrees of Impiety…from the *Waldensians*, *Lutherans*, *Calvinists*, or any *Non-conforming Protestants*?" implicitly grouping himself and other Dissenters with the other opponents of Rome in the eschatological history.[39]

It is worth noting that in this excerpt it is "*Non-conforming Protestants*" to which Keach referred, rather than any specifically named group, such as Baptists. While in this case he was keen to place himself and his coreligionists as part of the heritage of the Marian Martyrs and the early reformers of Foxe's works, he seems to have been altogether reticent at bringing the name of Baptists in particular into the discussion. Instead, he chose to cast a wide net of historical Protestantism, in which his own confession would presumably be included. Likewise, reflecting upon her deliverance from Babylon at the conclusion of *Distressed Sion Relieved*, Sion declared "Lovers of *Englands* Ancient Liberty/All Protestants I jointly will respect/And equally my People will protect."[40] In this case, the broad base of Protestantism was an appeal for a similarly broad-based toleration. Shared origins in a shared Protestant history would certainly help to justify that sort of toleration. Elsewhere Keach would cite an attachment to early

[39] Keach, *Antichrist Stormed*, 12-18.
[40] Keach, *Distressed Sion*, 117.

opponents to Rome in order to bolster his arguments on doctrine. In his 1691 defense of hymn singing it was "the *Waldenses* practice of Singing, &c. and all other Godly Christians since the beginning of the Reformation" that gave additional credibility to the Baptist's practice of the same.[41] Keach believed that all Protestants, including of course his own Baptist coreligionists, shared in a part of the heritage that stretched back to the Waldensians and other forbearers of the Reformation. His presentation of martyrdom and the eschatological struggle with Rome was of a broadly and inclusively Protestant sort, much as the words he put into Sion's mouth, "All Protestants I jointly will respect," indicated.

Memoirs and prison tales: Personal histories and martyrology

Keach's poetry and prose writings, then, worked to situate him and his coreligionists – to say nothing of English Protestantism as a whole – in a historical and eschatological context. While he did not discuss the history and origins of the Baptists themselves, the *longue durée* context of English Protestantism's struggle against Rome is readily visible in his published works. Keach also understood the Restoration to be a period of persecution and danger to nonconformists such as himself, which would certainly go some way toward incorporating Baptists' experiences with the overarching narrative of persecution and martyrdom that defined that understanding of Protestantism. The context of the Restoration was one in which Keach's own experiences could be presented in a martyrological light, but he never chose to share his personal history through a memoir or other autobiographical works. Even his dramatic sedition trial of 1664, which featured prominently in later Baptist history, never made it into print during Keach's lifetime. But

[41] Keach, *Breach Repaired*, 69.

while he did not choose to share his personal history by writing a memoir, some of his coreligionists did leave behind accounts of their personal journeys.

Firstly, Keach's colleague William Kiffin apparently set down a manuscript account of his life in or around the year 1689, though it was not published until 1823. This approximate dating for the manuscript's writing is based on the narrative of the memoir, which concludes in the weeks before the Revolution. The editor of the 1823 publication, William Orme, noted that he had received the original manuscript from Rev. Richard Frost "a lineal descendent of Mr. Kiffin," and that considerable use of the manuscript was made in Noble's *Memoirs of the Protectorate House of Cromwell*, and Wilson's *History of the Dissenting Churches of London*.[42] In this memoir, Kiffin recounted his early religious experiences from his inauspicious beginnings (the plague killed his immediate family in London in 1625), but soon turns to matters of persecution and providence in his life.[43]

Kiffin's experience in London nonconformity dated back to the late 1630s, as did the persecution he faced. The memoir features some instances of providential punishment against persecutors, as with one man who became ill and died soon after being part of a group that burst into a Baptist meeting in 1638, though not before Kiffin prayed with him on his deathbed.[44] It is indicative of Kiffin's focus that he mainly recorded occasional legal troubles, accusations, and threats during the 1640s and 1650s, but seldom mentioned his wife and children.[45] While his focus was on his religion and his persecutions, chronologically most of the memoir deals with the Restoration, which

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[42] William Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin: Written by himself and edited from the Original Manuscript*, ed. William Orme (London: Burton and Smith, 1823), iii.
[43] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 2.
[44] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 15-16.
[45] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 16-18.

began appropriately with Kiffin being taken into custody by General Monck's soldiers, and subsequently being arrested once again after a meeting in Shoreditch.[46] He subsequently complained that "in every list…of disaffected persons, fit to be secured, I was always in one," though evidently the good graces of Charles II and the Earl of Clarendon, to whom he was known, kept him safe.[47] During later accusations of plotting Kiffin recorded his meditations on Isaiah 41:10 for strength, and with his eventual release he depicts his difficulties as an example "that it is not in vain to follow God in the way of duty."[48]

There can be little doubt that Kiffin felt himself assailed and persecuted as a Christian and intended to have his experiences recorded for the benefit of future readers. It is appropriate to this task, then, that he concluded the memoir with advice, ostensibly for his children, on God's providence: "While in this world there is not any design hatched against them for their ruin, but they are rescued from it by the special care and providence of God."[49] Designs being hatched against Kiffin and those close to him punctuate the story of his life and faith, and he suspected that some enemy meant to implicate him in the "pretended plot of the Duke of Monmouth and Lord Russell" (namely the Rye House Plot of 1682).[50] One of Kiffin's more shocking claims related to the death of his son, whom he alleged was poisoned by a Catholic priest in Venice: "Being too forward in discoursing with him about religion, the priest shewed his revenge, by sending him out of the world."[51] It is worth mentioning that this account of poisoning

[46] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 26-27, 32.
[47] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 36.
[48] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 38-15, 46.
[49] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 89.
[50] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 52-53.
[51] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 49.

by Catholic clergy is hardly unprecedented. Foxe recounted King John's murder in this fashion by a monk, and Keach would cite papists' poisoning of kings on more than one occasion.[52] While this story might lead one to question Kiffin's own credibility, there is little doubt that he sought to present popery as a continuing threat to Protestants like himself.

Foremost among Kiffin's long list of persecutions and abuses was the Monmouth Rebellion of 1685. This was another of the events that Keach memorialized in *Distressed Sion Relieved*, and, as we shall see, they would cast a long shadow in Baptist martyrology. The Bloody Assizes also featured heavily in Whig histories, and the Whig interpretation of these events remained well entrenched up until J.G. Muddiman's *The Bloody Assizes* in 1929.[53] The martyrs of the assizes included Kiffin's grandsons, William and Benjamin Hewling, whom Keach described as "two young Plants, who both sprang from one Stem/Belov'd of God, I hope, as well as men" before bemoaning the tyranny "That two such tender Branches would not spare."[54] Kiffin wrote that both "were under great dissatisfaction with seeing popery encouraged, and religion and liberty like to be invaded," while Keach similarly describes the rebels "seeing we were drawing nigh/To vassalage and ROMISH Tyranny."[55]

According to Kiffin, he attempted to "give three thousand pounds for their lives"

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[52] Foxe, *Actes and Mounments*, 68-69. Keach, "An Appendix," 147. Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 100-101.
[53] J.G. Muddiman, *The Bloody Assizes* (Glasgow and Edinburgh: William Hodge and Company, 1929). Muddiman criticizes the extent to which past historians had readily accepted the printed records of the trials, which were of course partisan documents. It is worth noting here that Muddiman quotes an early criticism on the "Bloody Assizes" by a Tory pamphleteer in 1712: "[the Whigs] in imitation of their elder brothers, the papists, have furnish'd out a new Martyrology of those Holy Ones who died for rebellion and treason, so that they can not only turn religion into rebellion, but sanctifie rebellion into religion, and by a dash of their pen change a pernicious crew of rebels and traytors into a noble army of Saints and Martyrs. 'Tis a great pity that highwaymen and housebreakers cannot do the like kindness for their poor, suffering, persecuted bretheren!" (5)
[54]Benjamin Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved, or, The Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness* (London: Printed for Nath. Crouch, 1689), 27.
[55] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 54; Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved*, 22.

but was unsuccessful, and he blamed Jeffreys in particular for the severity of the assizes.[56] The narrative of the execution is the set piece of Kiffin's memoir, taking up twenty-four pages of the relatively slender volume. This was undoubtedly a martyrological episode, with constant references to the good cheer and reassurance of the two young men. Kiffin reproduced letters from both, written shortly before their execution.[57] After their deaths, he also recorded the treatment with which William's body was met by the public: "very many of the town, to the number of about two hundred, came to accompany it. And several young women, of the best of the town, laid him in his grave, in Lyme church yard, the 13th of September 1685."[58] When Benjamin's execution came next, he remarked on Revelation 22:3-5 and sang, along with other condemned, with the ropes around their necks on the scaffold.[59] Kiffin concluded the narrative of his martyred grandsons by quoting that "A great officer in the king's army has been often heard to say, that if you would learn to die, 'Go to the young men of Taunton.'"[60]

Kiffin also provided a preface to the memoirs of Hanserd Knollys, published after Knollys's death in 1692 as *The Life and Death of That Old Disciple of Jesus Christ, and Eminent Minister of the Gospel, Mr. Hanserd Knollys*. Regretting that much of his friend's later career was not well reflected in the book, Kiffin recounted briefly Knollys's own persecution and good spirits through it all:

> [He] was a Prisoner in the New-Prison for the Truths sake many months, where with great chearfulness he remained, comforting and encouraging all that came to visit him, with many blessed exhortations to cleave to the Lord; none were sent empty away without some spiritual Instructions, and many of his Fellow-prisoners were greatly strengthened and comforted by that heavenly Counsel that

[56] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 54.
[57] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 56-80.
[58] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 66.
[59] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 75-77.
[60] Kiffin, *Remarkable Passages*, 78.

dropped from his lips.[61]

Kiffin was keen to point to the peaceful endurance of suffering that the Baptist divine exhibited. Knollys himself also emphasized the frequent persecution and Christian humility that typified his career. He was a preacher who "coveted no mans Gold nor Silver, but chose rather to labour," and recorded that he endured eighteen weeks of imprisonment with other peaceful Christians after Venner's Rising in 1660.[62] In 1670, he faced imprisonment again due to the Conventicle Act, and suffered from a "painful Distemper in my Bowels" that brought him "near the Grave" while imprisoned, though providence allowed him to heal.[63] Despite recurring hardships, however, Knollys stressed that God's providence also allowed him to make up for financial losses and he later had a school with fifty students and was able to give his daughter a dowry of three hundred pounds.[64] Overall this memoir, like Kiffin's, recounted the hardships of a Dissenter's life and provided a model of Christian endurance and continued faith. In Knollys's own words, he characterized his preaching career "against the Antichristian Powers, Ministers, Worshippers, and Traditions of the Beast, the great mystical Whore, and the false Prophet. Nore have I been terrified by the Adversary."[65]

John Bunyan, whose writings almost certainly influenced Keach's, also wrote about his personal experience with state-sanctioned persecution. His account of his arrest, trial, and imprisonment, was published posthumously in 1765. This *Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan,* saw Bunyan and his fellows in Bedford "only with

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[61] Hanserd Knollys and William Kiffin, *The Life and Death of That Old Disciple of Jesus Christ, and Eminent Minister of the Gospel, Hanserd Knollys, Who Dyed In the Ninety Third Year of his Age* (London: Printed for John Harris, 1692), Epistle to the Reader.
[62] Knollys and Kiffin, *Life and Death*, 24, 25.
[63] Knollys and Kiffin, *Life and Death*, 32.
[64] Knollys and Kiffin, *Life and Death*, 28.
[65] Knollys and Kiffin, *Life and Death*, 32.

our Bibles in our hands, ready to speak and hear the word of God" when constables came "to keep a very strong watch about the house…as if we that was to meet together in that place did intend to do some fearful business, to the destruction of the country."[66] While forewarned of the arrest, Bunyan reported that he remained because "if I should fly, it might be a discouragement to the whole body that might follow after. And further, I thought the world thereby would take occasion at my cowardliness, to have blasphemed the Gospel."[67] In spite of accusations that Bunyan intended to "plot and raise division, and make insurrection" while he was briefly at liberty in 1662, in his narrative his imprisonment was an opportunity for greater proximity to the divine.[68] Far from being the untrustworthy radical and plotter that he was depicted as, he portrayed himself as being favoured by God thanks to his arrest. He wrote that "God sometimes visits prisoners more/Than lordly palaces," and explicitly elevated the status of the imprisoned because of the distance from luxury and worldly things that comes with imprisonment: "The truth and life of heav'nly things/Lift up our hearts on high/And carries us on eagles wings/Beyond carnality."[69] This transcendence was in fact facilitated by the prison, as Bunyan wrote that "The Truth and I, were both here cast/Together," and that "This gaol to us is as a hill/From whence we plainly see/Beyond this world, and take our fill/Of things that lasting be."[70]

Bunyan, Kiffin, and Knollys each gave retrospective accounts of their persecution at the hands of England's confessional state. Though their autobiographical works were

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[66] John Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan, Minister of the Gospel at Bedford, In November, 1660* (London: Printed for James Buckland, 1765), 4.
[67] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 5.
[68] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 50
[69] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 70
[70] Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment*, 71

published at widely varying times, all were clearly written with posterity in mind. And given the experiences that they recounted for future readers, the Restoration can hardly have seemed like anything but a persecuting age, punctuated by periods of suffering for Christians like themselves. Memoirs and personal histories provided an immediate narrative of suffering, endurance, and God's providence. So too did the verse and prose that both Bunyan and Keach wrote throughout the Restoration. Whether or not their allegories and poems were based primarily on personal experience, their perspectives of their respective times as reflected in these works cannot but have been influenced by their own encounters with the state. While Keach's contributions came in the form of poems rather than personal accounts, his efforts were similar to those of his coreligionists. The narrative of suffering and martyrdom amongst Baptists fit into the overarching narrative of Protestants facing persecution at every turn in defense of the true church. Keach and some other Baptists used both their personal experiences and those of their friends and contemporaries to present an appropriately sympathetic image. A more comprehensive history of the Baptists, however, was yet to be written. When the writing of proper Baptist history began after Keach's death in 1704, however, he would play an important role in the narrative.

Keach in the Histories of the Baptists

Keach, of course, featured in the Maze Pond Church's record of its own foundation, and thus may be considered an important character in that congregation's history. That the church's founders chose to include in their records a play-by-play account of the break with Keach and the Horselydown church over hymn-singing is indicative of the nature of

origin story they saw their church as having. As we have seen in Chapter 4, Keach appeared in these proceedings as an overbearing, rigid bully of a leader, all the better to dramatize that split over a matter of principle. But Maze Pond was not to be Keach's only legacy in Baptists' histories. Not long before his death he was one of the particular targets, along with Baptists generally, of a book by one David Russen. *Fundamentals without Foundation: Or, a True Picture of the Anabaptists* (1703) included defamation of Keach, accusing him of impropriety. Joseph Stennett, a Baptist who also spoke at Keach's funeral, answered these accusations along with the rest of the attack on Baptists.[71] While a copy of Russen's book does not appear in the database of Eighteenth Century Collections Online and may not be extant, Stennett's response is readily available and provides extensive quotations from the original work.

Russen evidently wrote the book, not to correct Baptists, but to be read by those who might unduly sympathize with them, "*that take them for Saints, when they are not so much as Christians*."[72] It would seem, then, that Russen was responding to an audience that, he suspected, had been taken in and convinced by Baptists' self-portrayal as suffering Saints, though to what extent this concern might demonstrate the real efficacy of Baptist polemic and apologetic is uncertain. In any case, he sought to correct these sympathies through an appeal to the fanatical history and dangerous errors of the group. Russen's claims that there was "in one Anabaptist many Hereticks" and that "when Men turn Anabaptists…they become Antinomians, rejecting the Rule of the Law; then Enthusiasts—then Libertines—then Ranters" are altogether familiar and follow the established pattern of scatter-shot sectarian association that typifies the works of

[71] Austin Walker, *The Excellent Benjamin Keach* (Dundas, Ontario: Joshua, 2004), 24-28.
[72] Joseph Stennett, *An Answer to Mr. David Russen's Book, Entitul'd Fundamentals without a Fountain, or a True Picture of the Anabaptists* (London: Printed by D. Brown, S. Crouch, and J. Baker, 1704), 3.

Edwards, Featley, and others.[73] Likewise familiar is the polemic's association of Baptists with Quakers, Quakerism being referred to as the "next step from Anabaptism."[74]

Stennett mocked some of Russen's inconsistent rhetoric, occasionally using a light tongue-in-cheek tone, but goes on to confront his claims one at a time. He responded to Russen point by point on the ordinance of Baptism, before moving on to the "Names and Sects" of Baptists. These names predictably included Huttites, Muncerians, Melchiorites, and Enthusiasts with all associations of historical radicalism that come with them, though with the addition of "Dipper," in an apparent nod to Featley. Stennett worked to disentangle the origins of these different names, noting that if "Dippers" were one particular sect then "he will make the Sect of the Anabaptists as old as Christianity it self; for *John the Baptist* and the Apostles were Dippers" (that is, they practiced baptism by immersion).[75] More seriously, Stennett cleared the English Baptists of negative associations by insisting that they "were never known by divers of these Names, nor ever could be justly charg'd with the Errors proper to divers of the Sects Mr. *R*. has here mentioned."[76]

While the largest portion of the book was devoted to answering different objections to the practice of Believer's Baptism and the consequences thereof, Stennett eventually turned his attention to the matters of Baptists' conduct and history for the final seventy pages. He ridiculed the claim that Jesuits and Anabaptists were co-conspirators as a ridiculous invention of Russen's, responded to his attacks on John Tombes and Henry Danvers, and repudiated his claims about Baptists' heresies – including the claim of

[73] Stennett, *An Answer*, 14-15.
[74] Stennett, *An Answer*, 15.
[75] Stennett, *An Answer*, 53-54.
[76] Stennett, *An Answer*, 55.

Arianism, and an association with that other old heresy, Donatism.[77] The Baptists' history was revisited again as well, with Stennett defending them against claims of radicalism in the Civil Wars and the sixteenth century.[78] Here "Mr. *R*. is not content to stigmatize the Anabaptists in general…but improves this History to the Defamation of the *Sectaries in England* without distinction."[79] In the context of these general attacks on the character and conduct of Baptists and their ministers (whom Russen describes as uneducated and unsuited to their task), Keach was accused of "the Vice of Uncleanness," which in its immediate context seemed to refer to improper conduct while baptizing women. Stennett took particular exception to this slur against Keach "with whose person and character I have been long acquainted."[80] He subsequently appended to his work a testimony as to Keach's innocence of any such accusations, which carried the names of twenty-eight friends and neighbours (including, according to Stennett, two members of Parliament).[81]

The defence of Keach's reputation, then, was situated in the broader debate over Baptists, their beliefs, history, and essential character. Eight years after his death, his personal experiences would become part of the Baptists' confessional history. The first full account of Keach's 1664 trial can be found in the 1712 "Repository of Divers Materials Relating to the English Anti-Paedobaptists," assembled by Keach's son in law Benjamin Stinton. This unpublished manuscript, which is held in the Angus Library of Regent's Park College in Oxford, resembles nothing more closely than a collection of preparatory notes to a general history of the Baptists in England. Stinton never wrote such a history, but after his death his manuscript became the basis for the *History of the*

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[77] Stennett, *An Answer*, 198, 200-202, 213, 216.
[78] Stennett, *An Answer,* 221-224.
[79] Stennett, *An Answer*, 236.
[80] Stennett, *An Answer*, 139-140.
[81] Stennett, *An Answer*, 250-251.

English Baptists, from the Reformation to the beginning of the reign of King George I, written by Keach's other son in law, Thomas Crosby. In the 1739 preface to the later publication, Crosby addressed himself to

> [The] *English reader*…because in this land were these actions done; and their fore-fathers, with bleeding hearts and distilling eyes, were spectators of, and *common sufferers under*, the insulting paces of tyrannical, arbitrary power, and unlimited prerogative, and had a cup of blood prepared for them; though, blessed by God, it is otherwise with us.[82]

From the outset, then, Crosby's history was intended to make common cause with a general Protestant audience and to place Baptists within the a larger narrative of Protestant persecution and suffering under the Stuart monarchs.

As for the source materials, the Stinton Repository is composed mainly of transcribed documents, being first-hand accounts of incidents of persecution, excerpts from published histories (such as those of Foxe, Gilbert Burnett, or the Earl of Clarendon), and confessions of faith, apologia, or letters composed by Baptists themselves. While Stinton recorded some sixteenth century references to Anabaptists, including one collection of the religious opinions "of the Old Lollards, New Reformed & Anabaptists" from Henry VIII's reign, these references all seem to be to foreign Anabaptists. Stinton explicitly denied that these foreign groups were the source of English Baptists, instead citing earlier instances of anti-paedobaptism in English history.[83] Nonetheless, Stinton's sources on the English Baptists proper began in the early seventeenth century. He recorded the Humble Supplication of one congregation to James VI and I against "Antichristian Prelacy" and in the hopes that independent congregations

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[82] Thomas Crosby, *The history of the English Baptists, from the Reformation to the beginning of the reign of King George I*, Vol. 1 (London: Printed for, and Sold by, the Editor, at his House in Vine-Street, Minories; or at his House upon Horse-ly-down, Southwark, 1738), xvii.

[83] Benjamin Stinton, "A Repository of Divers Materials Relating to the English Anti-Paedobaptists," Angus Library, Regents Park College, Oxford, 30, 37, 46, 53-57, 80.

such as theirs should have "full Power of all the Church affairs entire within it selfe." Next came the group's subsequent persecution under "malicious Adversarys" and their "Holy & Gratious carriage in their suffering," which continued well into the 1630s under Archbishop Laud as "The Good Lord Jesus gave…severall Tryalls afterwards wherein the Lord gave occation [to] Triumphing in him."[84] Appropriately, Archbishop William Laud was indirectly implicated in these sufferings. Confessions of faith from London in 1639 and 1643 followed, carrying several names including those of William Kiffin and Hanserd Knollys.[85] The Baptists' experiences in the Civil Wars were reflected by the reproduction of a 1648 order from parliament rendering the denial of infant baptism punishable by imprisonment, and an excerpt from Edwards's *Gangraena* giving the account of one Baptist, Lawrence Clarkson, suffering for his faith and recanting.[86]

The sources presented an origin of the Baptists in England that was at odds with the history provided by hostile accounts. Rather than tracing them back to continental origins of the sixteenth century, Stinton's sources began the English Baptists' history as a part of English opposition to Rome, and later as a part of Jacobean Puritanism. Rather than being implicated in the excesses of revolutionary activity during the mid-century, their experiences were limited to some internal discussions about the ordinance of Baptism and their sporadic persecution, noted above. Following these early days, the Restoration appeared in the Stinton Repository as a persecuting age altogether in line with the experiences recorded by Keach, Kiffin, and Knollys. Along with 1660 came "A Brief Account of the Sufferings of the People called Anabaptists in & about London, in the two first Years after the Restoration of King Charles II." This document explained

[84] Stinton, "A Repository," 1, 4, 5, 7-8.
[85] Stinton, "A Repository," 12.
[86] Stinton, "A Repository," 34, 36.

that, in spite of the Baptists being among the first to speak against Cromwell and support the King's return (attested to by a 1658 letter that Stinton transcribed), and despite their disavowal of Venner's rebellion (also transcribed), many Baptists were arrested early in the Restoration, including Hanserd Knollys.[87]

Stinton cited both Knollys's own *Life*, as well as contemporary pamphlets such as *A True Relation of the Inhumane & Vicious outrages and practices upon the Lords People Called Anabaptists*, printed in 1662. Using these sources he recorded a series of attacks and arbitrary proceedings against Baptists in June, October, and November of 1661. 1662 saw additional raids by soldiers with swords drawn, Baptists being held in custody without having their case heard in a reasonable amount of time, and in one case the pulpit in a meeting house being broken. The sources also pointed out that women and children were assaulted in some of these instances.[88] The relation of these events from *A True Relation* ended with a concluding remark that spoke to the attitude of Christian endurance reflected in the sources:

> Many other Cruel & inhumane Actions, they have committed at other times, & in other places, which is here omitted, which no doubt but the Lord hath taken Notice of, & will one day recompence it upon the heads of them that ware the Actors in it…the Law allowing no such violence, but on the Contrary forbids & punish[es] it; but we are content to wait until the Lord Shall arise & plead our cause.[89]

Stinton's sources, then, paint a picture of the Restoration as a period characterized by persecution, crying out for God's justice, in which Baptists were left with no option but to peacefully wait upon deliverance.

While Stinton and Crosby would both acknowledge that other nonconformists faced persecution, their obvious confessional focus saw them single out Baptist suffering

[87] Stinton, "A Repository," 59, 72-78.
[88] Stinton, "A Repository," 86-91.
[89] Stinton, "A Repository," 91.

as being exemplary. Crosby made use of Stinton's sources, and cited the cases of a number of prominent Baptists singled out and arrested. In keeping with the distancing of Baptists from the Civil Wars, Crosby wrote about Kiffin and Vavasor Powell both being subject to prosecution and physical attacks during the 1650s, when "The fury of these times seemed to be more especially turn'd against the opposers of *infant-baptism.*"[90] Knollys and Powell were also arrested soon after the Restoration, while Bunyan was singled out for his twelve-year imprisonment "in the Master's cause."[91] Crosby contended to his reader, as Stinton had, that despite being opposed to Cromwell and cleared from Venner's rebellion, Baptists "were so far from being allow'd the liberty of their religion, that the first and most violent persecution was chiefly levell'd against them."[92] Not only did the Baptists suffer under the persecuting state of the Restoration, they were presented as the *greatest* suffers in that age. It was in this context, and having thus characterized the early Restoration, that both Stinton and Crosby introduced Keach's story.

This is the narrative into which Crosby inserted "The reverend and famous Mr. *Benjamin Keach,*" who first appeared preaching at a meeting in Buckinghamshire which was broken up by the authorities: "he was seiz'd, and four of the troopers declared their resolution to trample him to death with their horses; and laying him bound on the ground, prepared themselves for the fact," before their officer intervened.[93] It was, according to Crosby, later in the same year that he wrote the *Child's Instructor* and was brought to trial for it. The history cast Keach's trial in the light of arbitrary cruelty, as the judge

[90] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 217.
[91] Crosby*, History of the English Baptists*,Vol. 2, 92.
[92] *Crosby, History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 91.
[93] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists,* Vol. 2 185-186.

began by making "unjust reflections upon his person and profession" and thereafter "endeavoured to incense the *Jury* against the *prisoner*, representing him as a base and dangerous fellow." Crosby also added context for Keach's decision to be tried immediately rather than giving surety and awaiting trial by copying from the Stinton manuscript that "his appearing at any dissenting-meetings, would be deemed in those evil times a breach of his good behaviour."[94] In total, "It is easy to discover, that this trial was carried on in a very arbitrary manner, and a *verdict* extorted against him from the *Jury*. Not could any pardon be obtain'd, or the least relaxation of the severe sentence."[95]

"The trial of Mr. Benjamin Keach" appeared in the Repository as a transcript that, according to Stinton, was found among Keach's papers after his death, having been sent to him by an individual who had been present at the trial. Insofar as it records the statements of both the accused and the judge, Chief Justice Hyde, it is almost identical to the version of the trial published as part of the *State Tryals* in 1719. But, unlike the *State Tryals*, the Stinton version includes marginalia and additional descriptions. It also includes an account of Keach's punishment and his defiance on the pillory, of which the *State Tryals* only records, in direct contradiction, that he was not permitted to speak.[96] The additional description present in the Stinton version all aided in creating the narrative that Crosby and Stinton sought to present. When the judge acted to silence Keach, the account records that "This Threatining made Mr. K. & some of his Friends…fear that he intended to have him hanged."[97] When Keach was refused a copy of the indictment he was "deny'd his right as an Englishman," and when Hyde summed up the evidence to the

[94] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists,* Vol. 2, 187-200; Stinton, "A Repository," 97.
[95] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists,* Vol. 2, 203-204.
[96] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 1020
[97] Stinton, "A Repository," 100.

jury he "he cast many Reflections on ye Prisoner to incense them" and so on.[98] Overall, the source, of which Crosby would later make use, provides additional explanation of events which all cast the trial in the light of an arbitrary persecution.

If the unjustified cruelty of the judge provided the Baptist history with sufficient evidence of the state's persecuting tendencies with respect to Keach's trial, his own performance following the trial confirmed his status as an exemplary martyr. Rather than being the site of his own humiliation, the pillory allowed Keach to preach and defend himself. Keach declared, "The Apostle saith *That thro' many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heave;* and Christ saith, *He that is ashamed of me and my words, in an adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the son of man be ashamed, before the father, and before his holy angels*." While briefly quieted by the jailor, Keach, as per Crosby "pull'd his *Bible* out of his pocket, and held it up to the people," claiming he could sustain all he wrote, "and for which I stand here this day, a spectacle to men and angels" with scripture, "if I had an opportunity."[99] After preaching with his Bible, Keach went on to say that he had written his book out of concern for human souls, "for which I could suffer far greater things than these." He further advised the crowd that, if they do not heed his preaching, "it will be very sad with you, at the revelation of the Lord *Jesus* from heaven, for we must all appear before his tribunal."[100] While Keach was put on trial and found guilty, his punishment became a platform from which he warned those present of the all-important judgement that awaited them all. Keach was recorded to say that

[98] Stinton, "A Repository," 97, 100.
[99] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 205-206.
[100] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 207.

through faith in Christ, believers are "willing to go through any sufferings for his sake" and concludes that that the yoke of his punishment is made light.[101]

Keach was hardly the only Baptist to receive biographical attention in Crosby's work, nor the only one to be presented as a martyr enduring unchristian persecution. Of Keach's friend Hanserd Knollys, Crosby said, "For above forty years successively he preached three or forty times every week, whilst he had health and liberty; and when he was in *prison*, it was his usual practice to preach every day."[102] The *History* then gave an account of his repeated dislocation, to the colonies at one point, to Wales at a another, and into Holland and Germany before returning to London, which "tended very much to the exercise of his graces…and furnished him with frequent instances of the great love and goodness of God."[103] Suffering and dislocation were seen to promote grace and godliness, much as Bunyan said of imprisonment. Individuals who suffered under the "Bloody Assizes" also reappeared in Crosby: Elizabeth Gaunt was described as being executed for harbouring a fugitive from Monmouth's rebellion. The fugitive himself turned her in, while her conviction was assured by the manipulations of the judge. Rather than expressing dismay, Gaunt placed herself within the tradition of the Marian Martyrs: "She rejoiced, that God had honoured her to be the *first* that suffered by *fire* in this reign; and that her suffering was a *martyrdom*, for that religion which was all love."[104]

Gaunt's case is exceptional in that she is the only woman who received such treatment in Crosby's *History*. She had also been singled out for attention from Keach, though not specified to be a Baptist, in Sion's mourning for the martyrs of the Bloody

[101] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 207.
[102] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 337.
[103] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 339.
[104] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 186.

Assizes: "Poor Mistress *Gaunt*, most dear thou wast to me/Few of thy Sex ever excelled thee/In Zeal, in Knowledge, or in Charity."[105] The female martyr could not help but stand out in the Baptists' accounts, given both the severity of her punishment and her own conduct while facing it. Gaunt's dying speech before execution (or the one that was attributed to her, at least) was published by Keach's sometime printer John Dunton as part of a collection in 1689, and Crosby reproduced it again. In this speech she declared: "I have cause to rejoice, and be exceeding glad, in that I suffer *for righteousness sake*, and that I am accounted worthy to suffer for *well doing*; and that God hath accepted any service from me, which hath been done in sincerity, tho' mixed with manifold infirmities."[106] She then closed her speech with a warning against the powers that put her to death, saying, "I leave it to him who is the avenger of all such wrong, *who will tread upon princes as upon mortar, and be terrible to the kings of the earth*…he will be upon you ere you are aware."[107] Read in 1689, or in 1738 for that matter, these last words could be seen to have accurately foretold the downfall of the Roman Catholic tyranny that put Protestants like Elizabeth Gaunt to death. As such, her martyrdom as a Baptist placed Crosby's co-religionists at the centre of a pivotal moment in England's Protestant history.

Orthodoxy and Toleration

[105] Keach, *Distressed Sion*, 38.
[106] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 189; Anon., *The Dying Speeches, Letters and Prayers, &c. of those Eminent Protestants Who Suffered in the West of England, (And Elsewhere) under the Cruel Sentence Of the late Lord Chanellour, Then Lord Chief Justice Jefferys* (London: Printed for John Dunton, 1689), 11.
[107] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 191; *The Dying Speeches*, 12.

Part of what made Elizabeth Gaunt a perfect example of martyrdom was also the fact that she herself had not taken part in the rebellion nor done anything objectionable. Baptists, as we have seen, had often been associated with fanaticism, heresy, and plotting. Stinton's transcription of a 1660 Baptist apology, specifically denying common ground with the Fifth Monarchists, and Crosby's reproduction of the same, were necessitated by such continuous associations.[108] With this context in mind, Crosby's *History* and Stinton's Repository sought to make clear their loyalty and religious orthodoxy. They were not alone in making this point. Crosby's contemporary Daniel Neal, author of *History of the Puritans or Protestant Non-Conformists*, wrote that "Protestant Dissenters have always stood by the Laws and Constitution of their Country" identifying both their support for the Glorious Revolution and explaining that many had "suffered for their steady Adherence to the Protestant Succession in the illustrious House of his *PRESENT Majesty*, when great Numbers that called themselves *Churchmen* were looking another way."[109] Neal thus sought to present nonconformists generally as the most loyal of English Protestants. Moreover, far from marking nonconformity out as a schism from mainline English Protestantism, he also sought to trace the beliefs of Puritans to the earliest reformers as well. In his version of history, Puritanism began with John Wycliffe, who "maintained…most of those points by which the PURITANS were afterwards distinguished." This included their positions with regard to religious orders, tradition, ceremonies, and prescribed forms of prayer.[110] And while Crosby complained that Neal had represented Baptists in "odious colours," they too were presented as part of English

[108] Stinton, "A Repository," 72-78. Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 35-48.
[109] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, viii-ix.
[110] Neal, *History of the Puritans,* Vol. 1, 4.

Puritanism rather than continental radicalism.[111] Neal clearly "distinguished the *German* Anabaptists from the *English*" and included the latter "who differ'd only from their Protestant Brethren about the Subject and Mode of *Baptism*," in his history of the nonconformity.[112]

If Neal included Baptists as part of his history of Puritanism, Crosby went a step further to place their beliefs within the origins of Protestantism. Much as Neal adopted Wycliffe as a proto-Puritan, Crosby sought the predecessors of English Baptists among the early reformers as well. As opposed to Featley's contention that "Anabaptism took its first rise at *Munster*," he saw the objections against infant baptism and "sprinkling" (as opposed to immersion) being considered, if not accepted, by reformers like Zwingli, Melanchthon, and Luther fully a decade beforehand.[113] While "[t]he extravagant doctrines, and seditious practices" of Münster were everywhere hung upon all who share their belief on Baptism, Crosby countered this point with the observation that Rome had attributed similar crimes to "the consequence of letting men have the scriptures to read, and the liberty of judging for themselves in matters of religion."[114] Through this account, adult baptism in the Reformation was both separated from the violence of certain Anabaptists, and the rhetoric of the English Baptists' accusers is made to parallel that of Roman Catholics against the reformers themselves.

Having acquitted the English Baptists of their association with continental radicals, Crosby moved back further to find the pre-Reformation precedents of Protestantism and Baptists in particular. This account of the *longue durée*, like Foxe's,

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[111] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, ii.
[112] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 3, 159.
[113] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, xix-xxii, xxix.
[114] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, xxiii-xxiv.

began with John Wycliffe, who was followed by the Lollards in England and Jan Hus in Bohemia.[115] Crosby's cast of characters, including medieval heretics and early Reformers, was one that would be familiar to readers of Foxe, but in the Baptist history they were also presented as sharing the English Baptists' hesitance towards infant baptism. Crosby's history shared with Foxe its focus on England's central role, and he wrote about early English Christian adherence to the true faith in the face of pressure from Saxons and the See of Rome. In spite of Roman persecution "pure religion was [never] extirpated out of the Island," surviving particularly in the peripheries of Wales and Cornwall.[116]

In the important matter of the English pre-Reformation, Crosby identified the Waldensians, key markers of proto-Protestantism, as bringing both the Gospel and the opposition of infant Baptism to England from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries, despite facing persecution under Henry III.[117] Subsequently the *History* even reveals John Wycliffe himself as friendly to Baptist beliefs, "because some men of great note and learning in the church of *Rome*, have left it upon record that he denied infant-baptism."[118] Stinton had similarly recorded that Lollards following Wycliffe did not believe in infant baptism, and that in 1428 some Christians were burned in Norwich for denying that the children of believers needed to be baptized.[119] Baptists were thus effectively planted at the very root of the Reformation. While Crosby admitted the possibility that Wycliffe may not have actually been a pre-Reformation Baptist, he claimed that his doctrines led

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[115] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 7-20, Vol. 2, xlii-xlviii. Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, 45, 86-108, 209-211, 248-260. Comparison of these sections shows a very similar role in Protestant history played by Wycliffe and the Lollards, as well as the medieval heretics.
[116] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, xiv, xxvii.
[117] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, xlii-xlviii.
[118] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 7-9.
[119] Stinton, "A Repository," 80.

in that direction; "and if he did not pursue the consequence of his own doctrines so far, yet many of his followers did."[120] In adding Baptist voices to the framework of Foxe's history, Crosby blended his confessional allegiance with that of other English Protestants in their shared experience of the struggle between the true church and the false. Moreover, his adoption of the Foxeian genre of martyrology gave him a platform to try to nurture a sympathetic audience with a familiar narrative form. If Baptists were made into a part of the Foxeian tradition, their punishment under the law in the Restoration or in the eighteenth century became the persecution of martyrs.

Appropriately, Crosby's opening statement on the Baptists' experience in England was that "the spirit of persecution has often prevailed in this land…And whenever it has been thus, those who were branded with the name of Anabaptists have been sure to feel the sharpest part of these things."[121] In placing Baptists at the centre of England's history of persecution, dating back to the Waldensians, Lollards, and Wycliffe, Crosby was following the model of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* and its martyrological history of the true church's battle against the errors of Rome. Each history attempted to demonstrate that their contemporary church had its origins in the Patristic church and in the doctrines of heroic proto-Protestants and martyrs. It was only appropriate that constant suffering is the emphasis of these writings, but the history of martyrdom did not only serve to promote the virtue of the Baptists and the legitimacy of their beliefs. It was also a case for toleration.

While the beliefs of martyrs had been important to Foxe's narrative, the dramatic cruelty of their persecutors was also highlighted throughout his work. *Acts and*

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[120] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 12.
[121] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 1-2.

Monuments certainly did not reject the dictum of Augustine, "Non facit martyrem poena, sed causa" [The punishment does not make the martyr, but the cause], as exhibited in his treatment of figures like Thomas Beckett. But the detailed narratives of Christian suffering and the lavish woodcuts of burnings and executions that adorned the work gave the "Book of Martyrs" a deserved reputation as lurid recitation of inhumanity. While the cause was clearly important, to quote one commentator: "Foxe gives us instead 'the numbers incredible of Chistian innocents that were slaine and tormented, some one way, some an other,'" a documentary history of *poena* "so horrible and grievous, that maketh the pen almost temble to write upon it."[122] So much so, perhaps, that it made *poena* the proof of *causa*. Crosby, like Foxe, looked to the past sufferings of martyrs as a means to exonerate the beliefs of his coreligionists, but the further cause of Christian toleration, regardless of differences in belief, is manifest. On this topic, he would agree with the Baptist Robert Tichtborne, whose 1649 book Crosby quoted, saying "Persecution is such a foreigner to heaven, that I may safely say, whatever brings it into a person or nation never came from God."[123]

Keach had made similar use of his own Restoration accounts of persecution and hostility. He complained that division between Protestants in England "Has done more Mischief than a *Popish Sword*," a situation in marked contrasted to the primitive church where "Among *Apostles* some *dissentions* were/But did they therefore *persecute* each other?"[124] Regretting the state of religious debate in which he and others were faced with

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[122] Nova Myhill, "Tedious Persecutions: 'A Table of the X. First Persecutions of the Primitive Church' Inside and Outside John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments,*" in *Acts of Reading: Interpretation, Reading Practices, and the Idea of the Book in John Foxe's Actes and Monuments*, ed. Thomas P. Anderson and Ryan Netzley (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2010), 139.
[123] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 12-13.
[124] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 29, 31.

"*odious nick-names*, and such *vile miscalling*," he compared the attacks of "*Hot-headed Scriblers* [sic]" to the way "*hellish Monks* did serve *Waldensian* Saints" and in "*Popish Impudence*" intended to "bespatter all/The *Reformation*." Naturally, one imagines that the "vile miscalling" to which the poem referred included such names as "Dipper" and "Anabaptist." Having placed the opponents of Baptists and nonconformity on the side of popery by urging reasonable correction of fellow Protestants, he added, "But if you fail, then *leave him to his God*/Who can reform, or punish with a *Rod*."[125] All persecution was unchristian, and was ineffective as well. Crosby would go so far as to suggest in his second volume that the very excesses that Baptists were so often charged with in the sixteenth century were the result of persecution. He writes, "All historians about the seditions in Germany confess…that the *intolerable oppression* of the *magistrates* then, gave one *great* occasion of their *rise* and *progress* to that height."[126] This precedent he quickly compared with persecution and insurrection in England, adding, "what need I go farther then our divers and manifold insurrections in *England*, against all kinds and degrees of *authority*?"[127]

Writing for a Hanoverian audience, Crosby may have expected such references to resistance to be readily associated with the celebrated resistance of the Glorious Revolution. Crosby explained in his *History* that despite his policy of toleration James II's true aim "was to establish the *popish* religion upon the ruins of the *protestant*."[128] In particular, Crosby considered the early stages of James's reign to be a time in which "SWARMS of *Jesuits*, and regular priests, were sent for from abroad," schools were

[125] Keach, *Distressed Sion*, 75, 71.
[126] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 71-72.
[127] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 74.
[128] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 199.

established, and "The way to preferment, was to be a *catholick*, or to declare for the prerogative; for all state affairs were managed by such men."[129] In this, Crosby echoed Keach's concerns from 1681 of "*Rome's* black Militia…Annoying *Europe* in unusual Swarms."[130] Of the Revolution itself, Crosby happily recorded William and Mary's ascent to the throne, which brought "*liberty of conscience* to all *protestant Dissenters* established by law."[131]

Whig history was in the ascendancy when Crosby wrote his Baptist history, and so while his language may not have replicated that of contemporary publications, his sentiments on the Revolution certainly did. As Laird Okie writes on the subject, Gilbert Burnet's work had set the standard for Whig histories, and White Kennett's *Complete History of England* (1706), which went through four reprints by 1719, was a "tirade against 'popery' and its inevitable result, 'arbitrary power.'"[132] Crosby frequently quoted the history of Paul de Rapin-Thoyras, the most celebrated historian of the day, who "glorified the English constitution and mixed monarchy, English rationality and religious tolerance."[133] It was in this historical context of Whiggish self-congratulation on the preservation of the constitution and of English tolerance that Crosby wrote, and it was also the stage on which Daniel Neal wrote his history.

While Crosby made clear his dislike for Neal for having made ill use of Baptist sources, the two shared a goal in terms of promoting greater toleration. The *History of the Puritans* was "intended as a massive historical argument for the abolition of the Test and

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[129] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 194-195.
[130] Keach, *Sion in Distress*, 18-19.
[131] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 249-251.
[132] Laird Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing: Histories of England in the English Enlightenment* (Lanham-New York-London: University Press of America, 1991), 29.
[133] Okie, *Augustan Historical Writings*, 47.

Corporation Acts" and Neal advocated for the attempted repeal of the Acts in 1736 and 1739.[134] Neal made an unambiguous case for toleration in saying that "Conscience can't be convinc'd by Fines and Imprisonments, or by Fire and Faggot" and "Long Experience has taught us, that Uniformity in Doctrine and Worship enforced by penal Laws, is not the Way to the Church's Peace."[135] Neal did not even limit his appeal to Protestants, including "Enthusiasts or Jews" as well.[136] He couched his argument in Whiggish language, writing that "as long as there is a *Protestant Dissenter* in *England* there will be a Friend of Liberty, and of our present happy Constitution," much as Crosby began his history with the statement that the English were "zealous of their natural rights and privileges."[137] Nonetheless, both works were indebted to Foxe for the scope and texture of their protestant histories, and both include the proto-Protestantism of figures like Wycliffe in their confessional origins.

Crosby, like Neal, wrapped his history of Baptists up in the longer history of Protestantism, and each historian cast general opprobrium on the inefficacy and Anti-Christianity of persecution. While Neal traced the Puritan positions back to Wycliffe in the fourteenth century, his story of their persecution properly began with Elizabeth, under whom "Severities, instead of reconciling the *Puritans* to the Church drive them further from it, for Men don't care to be beat for their Principles…nor can they be in love with a Church that uses such Methods of Conversion."[138] Crosby similarly noted of the Restoration, "how ineffectual those cruel and barbarous methods, by *fines* and *imprisonments*, &c. were to stop the growth and increase of the *English Baptists*," before

[134] Okie, *Augustan Historical Writings*, 86-87.
[135] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, 6, viii.
[136] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, xii. Okie comments on this inclusive toleration on page 87.
[137] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, ix. Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 1.
[138] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, viii.

recounting that one hundred congregations assembled at a general assembly in 1689.[139] He also called Thomas Edwards a "lying prophet" for his intolerant *Gangraena*, contending that, "*toleration* of different opinions is so far from disturbing the publick peace, or destroying the interests of princes and commonwealths, that it does advantage to the publick, and secures peace."[140] The roots of persecution itself Neal traced to the fourth Lateran Council of 1215, which he called the "Spring of that Antichristian Tyranny and Oppression," adding that "Papists learn'd it from the Heathen Emperors; and the most zealous Protestants of all Nations, have taken it up from them."[141] The genealogy of intolerance was rooted in Rome and Antichrist.

Crosby's *History* lacked any such precise account of the origins of persecution, but was in total agreement with Neal as to the relative Christianity of the practice. In one of the history's more eloquent defences of toleration, he quoted 1 Peter 5: "*Feed the Flock of God which is amongst you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly*." He then wrote that he was curious "[why] therefore the Christian Religion should be built and supported by violence and cruelty, when the foundation was laid, and the work carried on all the Apostles days, and some hundred of years after, by a quite contrary means."[142] Crosby was also clear that his depiction of unchristian persecution was heavily indebted to Foxe, and was likely to be effective precisely because of Foxe's work. By the early seventeenth century, he wrote, "Mr Fox…had so exposed the *Papists* for this kind of *cruelty* that it was generally disliked and condemn'd, and thought unaccountable that *Protestants* should be guilty of the same practice," and so James I

[139] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 245-6.
[140] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 179.
[141] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, 6.
[142] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, 116.

wisely avoided giving "public martyrdom" to his opponents.[143] Stinton had also adopted Foxe into the cause of toleration for Baptists, transcribing a letter from Foxe to Elizabeth I asking that some foreign Anabaptists not be burned as Smithfield due to their error.[144] Crosby thus gave a clear indication that he believed Foxe's work brought not only the punishment of righteous Protestants, but the matter of cruelty itself, into almost Antichristian disrepute through its intimate association with Catholicism. Crosby believed that English Protestants were uniformly opposed to the cruelty of persecution, regardless of the specific beliefs of the victims. If persecution was the tool of the true church's eschatological enemies in Rome, the simple endurance of persecution could elevate the persecuted into martyrdom.

Baptism and Baptist Identity

We have discussed Crosby's intentions in presenting the *History of the English Baptists* as he did: he desired to write a history that mirrored that of Foxe and thus included Baptists in a broader Protestant story, while at the same time he intended to make Baptists in particular into martyrs and advocate for greater toleration by showcasing their Unchristian and, in Whiggish terms, un-English persecution. The manner in which Crosby identified Baptists was also important. As we have seen, Crosby included various predecessors in his history of the Baptists, not on the basis of any direct genealogical connection with the English Baptists, but on the basis of their belief in only baptizing adult believers. Crosby traced the genealogy of this belief, as the identifying characteristic of his coreligionists, well beyond the excesses and disloyalties of Münster.

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[143] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 110.
[144] Stinton, "A Repository," 53-57.

In so doing he worked his way back to primitive church, which allowed him to vindicate the practice of Believer's Baptism, asserting that the early church did not practice infant baptism as a rule. By creating this ambiguity about the practice of the apostolic church, Crosby was able to conclude that, "the holy scriptures are to be the only rule of our faith and worship…because the most ancient churches were subject to error."[145] In short, Crosby's prologue concluded with an argument in defense of the Baptists' dissent in terms of Baptism.

While Crosby's work was akin to Neal's in its appeal for toleration, the specifically Baptist character of Crosby's work was also very clear. Beyond simply toleration for all dissenters, Baptists included, Crosby's cause was also to defend the principle of adult baptism. The very necessity of this history he laid at Neal's feet, he having "[represented] *the* Anabaptists*, as they in contempt to stile them, in* odious colours, *many* bitter things, *even* notorious falsehood." Crosby further complained that he had allowed Neal use of the Stinton notes, and yet he made "ill use" of them, and that the experiences of the English Baptists made up "less than five pages of his third volume," which he considered to reflect a tendency of "*Paedobaptist*" authors: in their writings "a vail has been drawn over the [Baptists]."[146] Crosby's depiction of Neal was partially correct in that neither Baptists nor adult Baptism gets much sustained attention in the *History of the Puritans*, and where Baptists or Anabaptists were mentioned they were seen to be more radical than other Puritans. Anabaptists fleeing Germany for England "held several wild Opinions," while Republicans and Levellers in the New Model Army were "chiefly Anabaptists." At the same time, Neal denounced the "Protestant

[145] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, lx.
[146] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, ii.

Inquisition" that faced the Anabaptists, and specifically denied that "the Principles of the *Presbyterians, Independants* [sic]*,* or *Anabaptists*" are rebellious.[147] That Neal included the Baptists here in a group of other nonconformists gives some indication that, while he did not agree with the principles of adult Baptism, he did consider them to be a part of his history as Puritans and nonconformity. His definition of Puritan as "a *Man of severe Morals, a Calvinist in Doctrine, and a Non-Conformist to the Ceremonies and Discipline of the Church*" certainly gave adequate scope for the inclusion of Baptists[148]

Merely to be included passively in the history of nonconformity or Puritanism, however, was not sufficient for Crosby. He believed that Paedobaptists like Neal refused to discuss such issues of "candid conviction in a Christian way," preferring to render Baptists "*as odious as they could, and as if they had nothing to say for their practice*."[149] Neal's lack of engagement on the subject was objectionable, notwithstanding his goal of greater toleration. A history focused on the issue of baptism and the defence of Baptist principles was Crosby's response to these slights. Certainly he would highlight some other areas of disagreement, but the crucial difference between the *longue durée* accounts of Foxe and Crosby is that in the *History of the English Baptists* the predecessors of the Reformation shared the Baptists' beliefs about baptism. It is the belief in Believer's Baptism upon which Crosby based most of his defences of his coreligionists and which represented his sole criteria in assessing his predecessors' identity as Baptists. While Crosby argued that infant Baptism was nowhere to be found among the Apostles or in the Patristic church, he also depicted purified Christianity, including believers' baptism,

[147] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, 60, Vol. 3, 147.
[148] Neal, *History of the Puritans*, Vol. 1, vi.
[149] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, lvi.

surviving in Cornwall and Wales after the arrival of the Saxons.[150] He went on to trace Baptist beliefs to the Waldensians and Albigensians of Bohemia and Languedoc, who "began there to oppose the errors and superstitions of the church of *Rome*, about the year 1160."[151]

If Crosby felt that the histories of Paedobaptists dodged the Baptist arguments, his work and that of Stinton before him provided an adequate chronicle of those arguments and the men who made them. Crosby included a long list of biographical sketches of prominent Baptists, their books, and their activities during the seventeenth century; a common feature in these was his recitation of the first occasions on which these men came into contact with debates over paedobaptism, during the Civil Wars in particular.[152] Stinton's repository furnished Crosby with several of these narratives. Among these sources, the earliest dated is a copy of a letter, the writer anonymous, from 1623. This letter takes a hard line with respect to the insufficiency of infant baptism, calling it a relic of Jewish circumcision and "a Jewish Antichristian fable."[153] The manuscript also includes an account of how a group led by Jacob and John Lathorp, and including William Kiffin, became dissatisfied with English congregations in the 1630s and, by 1640, had become convinced of the error of infant baptism and the necessity of Baptism by immersion.[154] A subsequent item gives lengthy account of a conference in Henry Jessey's congregation in 1643 on the practice of paedobaptism, in which Hanserd Knollys

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[150] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 2, xiv.
[151] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, xxx-xxxiv.
[152] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, 280-325.
[153] Stinton, "A Repository," 32.
[154]Stinton, "A Repository," 10. This narrative also mentions that the congregation joined together with one Mr. P. Barebone (possibly Praisegod Barebone, a Baptist later noted for his association with Cromwell's "Barebones Assembly") and Richard Blunt. It was Blunt who advocated for immersion on the basis of Baptism "resembling Burial & rising again" taken from Colossians 2:12 and Romans 6:4.

was a leading participant and which led to a split in that congregation when nineteen women and seven men, made their scruples on infant baptism known.[155]

It must be acknowledged that these accounts, and the preponderance of the leading Baptists whose encounters with and arguments over believers baptism were recorded, are centred in the religious proving ground of London itself. As such, the Baptists' immediate origins were well within the sphere of English Puritanism of the mid-century. Thus it is the cause of Believer's Baptism that necessitated the formation of new, specifically Baptist congregations during this period. Not content to simply clarify the Baptists' shared origins with other nonconformists, however, Stinton and Crosby also cited their paedobaptist fellow travellers in support of their own cause. Stinton included a transcription of one 1647 order from parliament, which admitted that on the issue of baptism "it is only a difference about a circumstance of time…wherein in former ages as well as this, learned men have differed, both in opinion & practice," while Crosby compared the Baptists' requirement of baptism for church membership with the articles of the Church of England and the judgments of the Presbyterian assembly of divines.[156] Contemporary debates with fellow Protestants would frame the third volume of Crosby's history, which he opened with the reproduction of a letter he wrote to a Mr. Urban on the question of baptism. Here he recited familiar arguments, placing infant baptism in context of the tradition of *sola scriptura* and citing a lack of biblical basis for the practice. Pointedly Crosby quoted his antagonist (in Crosby's own mind, at any rate), Daniel Neal, that the bible "contains the whole revealed will of God" and is "a more infallible guide,

[155] Stinton, "A Repository," 25-32. Fourteen members, including Knollys and his wife, are recorded as having joined with Kiffin. Jessey, though apparently resistant to the idea at first, is also said to have changed his opinion on baptism and was himself baptized in 1645.
[156] Stinton, "A Repository," 34; Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, ix-x.

than the unwritten traditions of men," before mocking other Protestants' inconsistency on following this principle when it comes to baptism. Having said enough of such "excellent instructors" as his fellow nonconformists, Crosby concluded that "we dare not do after their works."[157]

In spite of his association of Baptists with other nonconformists, and Protestant history generally, Crosby had scruples against emphasizing the main point of difference. But his emphasis on the disagreement between Baptists and paedobaptists apparently left little room for the acknowledgement of other controversies. Pointedly, the *History of the English Baptists* made no apparent distinction at any point between different Baptists who were separated over issues of soteriology or other disputed topics. Though he included a fairly lengthy account of Keach's career, he made no mention whatever of the schism over hymn-singing that occurred in the Horselydown congregation during the 1690s. That very dispute which brought the Maze Pond Church into being had no place in Crosby's account of the Baptists. Given Crosby's own personal association with Keach and with the Horselydown congregation of which he was apparently a member, it is very unlikely that this exclusion was simply an oversight.[158] Intentional redaction of those parts of Baptist history that obscure a sense of a unitary identity and Baptit orthodoxy are examples of the kind of broad and inclusive depictions of his denomination given by Crosby. His strong emphasis on Believer's Baptism as a doctrine that he set out to defend, and as an apparent barometer of who is fit for inclusion in his "Baptist" history, points to a particular set of priorities in terms of confessional identity. His sense of

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[157] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, i-xii, xi.

[158] The first volume of Crosby's history includes an advertisement for his teaching at a "Mathematical School Upon Horsely Down in Southwark." While Crosby does not explicitly state that he is a member of the congregation, given his close proximity and his religion, it seems unlikely that he would not be in communion with his father in law's former church.

Baptist identity, which he did not define precisely, or in so many words, is one that could include any Christian who rejects infant baptism in favour of Believer's Baptism and worships accordingly. According to this conception of identity, the earliest English Christians and central figures of the pre-Reformation such as Wycliffe and the Lollards could be brought within the Baptist umbrella even though they far predated the beginning of Baptist history as Crosby himself would define it. Crosby did not refer to these predecessors as Baptists themselves, of course, but he did connect them to the Baptists' origins.

More significant than his vague depiction of Baptist origins is the manner in which Crosby's sense of Baptist identity allowed him to obscure differences between Baptists. Disputes among Baptists were obscured or ignored, as the accounts of John Bunyan's career would leave the reader none the wiser about his own disputes and falling out with London Baptists like Kiffin and Keach.[159] It is that one label, "Baptist," that gives meaning to the history, and of all the authors discussed in this dissertation, Crosby was the one who was most preoccupied with that label. He was self-conscious about his use and claiming of the name "Baptist" and the preface to his first volume gives some explanation for his own use of the term. He carefully stated, "it is not…to cast a reproach on our adversaries; but because I think it the most proper term, by which we can be distinguished from other Christians."[160] While he acknowledged some disagreement over the best terminology, he preferred "Baptist" for the sake of clarity. On one hand, he rejected out of hand other names like "Anabaptist" and "Rebaptisers" as having been disavowed by Baptists generally, they being inherently critical of Believer's Baptism. On

[159] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 3, 63-70.
[160] Crosby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, vii.

the other hand, he discarded "Anti-Paedobaptists" as unwieldy and unspecific because it would also include groups like the Quakers, who rejected baptism entirely. He settled on "Baptists" because, as he quoted another commentator, the best terms were those "as cast no reproach on themselves, nor their opponents."[161]

"Baptists," then, was the term best suited for Crosby's task of engaging in candid, Christian discussion of that most important point of disagreement. The need for a Baptist history and martyrology is connected to that debate, and also to the very clarifying of the name "Baptist" that Crosby undertook in his preface. When setting down to write his history, then, Crosby was reclaiming the name of "Baptist." He would clarify what that name meant, defining the identity of those to whom it was applied. And, most importantly, he would make their history one of martyrdom, Christian endurance, and faith in their Protestant principles.

Conclusion

Crosby had set a standard for the history of Baptists in the eighteenth century, but the stories of Baptists like Keach could readily be placed in varying contexts. On one hand, Crosby's Baptist history had used Keach for an example of persecution as a defining characteristic of Baptist history. On the other hand, in the contrasting realm of legal history, the matter-of-fact accounting of Keach's 1664 experience, perhaps with some helpful editing by Thomas Salmon, provided a demonstration of the state enforcing the letter of the law. For the Tory commentator, the case was mainly interesting because it provided him with new information as to how the laws were applied in 1664. Specifically, "it seems the publishing [of] heretical Doctrines, contrary to those of the

[161] Crisby, *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. 1, vii-viii.

established Church, was punishable in the Courts of common Law formerly: But the Act of Toleration put an end to such Prosecutions."[162] In this respect, the *State Tryals* of the early eighteenth century set the case in a similar vein as Chief Justice Hyde would have demanded in his own performance of the trial. It was a straightforward recitation of facts and law. Or at least, so Salmon would likely have had it.

If Keach's trial represented, in Salmon's commentary, an interesting example of how the law had been used in the 1660s, its inclusion in a collection intended for practical legal education of a layperson would be fitting. But the purpose of the *State Tryals* as an informative legal history was not in itself devoid of partisan use, or, indeed, a certain kind of martyrdom. As Brian Cowan notes, the history of the *State Tryals* complicates any suggestion that they were "designed to support a "Whig" agenda."[163] All the same, the sort of trials contained in the volumes could lend themselves to Whiggish causes of a broadly defined sort.

Donald Thomas appropriately notes that libel cases, and seditious libels in particular, were a major theme in the *State Tryals*, and they lent themselves readily to the political context of the late eighteenth century.[164] Appropriately, then, it was in a debate touching upon the topic of libel laws that Keach's trial found its way into the House of Commons. Specifically, it was brought up in an ultimately unsuccessful motion put forward by John Glynn to form a "Committee respecting the administration of Criminal Justice" in 1770. John Dunning, one of the MPs speaking in favour of the motion, cited Keach's case along with those of John Udall and Henry Care, in order to demonstrate the

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[162] Thomas Salmon, *A Critical Review of the State Trials* (London: William Mears and J. Stone, 1735), 299.
[163] Brian Cowan, *The State Trial of Doctor Henry Sacheverell* (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell for the Parliamentary History Yearbook Trust, 2012), 31. The quotation to which Cowan refers is taken from Annabel Patterson, *Early Modern Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 94.
[164] Donald Thomas, *State Trials, Vol. 1: Treason and libel* (Routledge & Kegan Paul 1972), 17.

injustice of their treatment by their judges, the trials of whom were found in the original *State Tryals*.[165] While all three men were religious controversialists it was not their religion that brought them into the debate, but the manner in which the law was applied to them. Their judges were seen to have abused their power, as in Udall's case Justice Clarke restrained the jury to consider only the fact of publication in their judgement, and in Keach's case Hyde "greatly exceeded [Clarke] in cruelty and brutality." Hyde "made use of these tenets to induce them to bring the culprit in guilty," and furthermore "received a verdict from the jury of guilty in part, and sentenced him as if guilty of the whole."[166]

Dunning also took notice of the fact that in each case the judge prevented the accused from defending himself on the basis that he lacked malicious intent. Turning his attention to similar conduct by contemporary judges, he condemns the use of this legal doctrine, which "had its origin in arbitrary times, and under arbitrary judges."[167] In keeping with this sentiment, the Cobbett and Howell edition of Keach's trial provided a marginal note acknowledging both Hyde's abuse of power and Dunning's statements in the House.[168] Keach's trial in the collection thus became not only the record of seventeenth-century legal practice that Salmon had taken it for, but also a piece in the eighteenth-century debate over libel laws. It may have further served, in the context of the nineteenth century volume, to confirm a sense of Whiggish history in which the "arbitrary times" during which Keach's trial took place had been mercifully left behind.

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[165] *State Tryals*, Vol. 1, 144, Vol. II, 554.
[166] *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, Vol. 16 (London: T.C. Hansard, 1813), 1277-78.
[167] *Cobbett's Parliamentary History*, 1276-8.
[168] Thomas Howell Ed., *Cobbett's Complete collection of state Trials and proceedings for high treason and other crimes and misdemeanors*, (London: Printed by T.C. Hansard, published by R. Bagshaw, 1809-1826), Vol. 6, 702.

The performance that put Hyde in the role of an arbitrary judge remained intact, but the narrative that he was part of had taken on a new dimension that may not have occurred to him or to Keach.

This nineteenth-century edition of Keach's trial may serve as a reminder that, while the performances given in these trials retain their potency in the collected volumes, their significance also depends upon their reception. Thomas Salmon himself took very pointed partisan lessons from the collected trials. So too did John Dunning, though his lessons were of an altogether different kind. Trials that were, in the immediate context of the 1660s, concerned with faith and the religious order, took on a different meaning in the next century. Even the most dramatic set piece of Keach's life – his trial and punishment – needs to be placed in an appropriate setting, with proper editorial direction, if it is to have meaning. But while Salmon, Howell, and Dunning provided such a context it is Crosby's history that shaped the lasting narrative.

Crosby's *History* became a standard reference work on Baptists. He is cited prominently by histories of the Baptists including Joseph Ivimey's nineteenth century work – the second volume of which alone includes over 100 direct in text references to Crosby.[169] Crosby is also well cited in the biography of C.H. Spurgeon, who himself wrote a history of his church, Keach's Horselydown, which was by then called the Metropolitan Tabernacle, by C.E. Whiting in his *Studies in English Puritanism*, as well as features in most of the other confessional histories that comprise the historiography on English Baptists.[170] No other eighteenth-century work includes such a comprehensive

[169] Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Bapists*, Vol. 2 (London: Printed for and by the Author, 1814). The same volume includes some fifteen references to Keach.
[170] C.H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle: Its History and Work* (London: Passmore of Alabaster, 1876), 31-32.

account of the English Baptists, and so it is little surprise that those who followed in Crosby's footsteps would do so by making significant use of his history. Furnished with the history that Crosby and Stinton had worked to compile, it is also little surprise that subsequent writers would depict Keach's congregation being founded in times of persecution by "brave men who feared not the stake and who had often seen fires burning their co-religionists."[171] Nor is it surprising to see the story of Keach at the pillory repeated in so much of the historiography, and even to see the protagonist styled "The Excellent Benjamin Keach" in a publication as recent as 2004.[172] As Crosby's history produced a standard account of the Baptists, their travails, and their identity, it was sure to be an account in which Benjamin Keach played an exemplary role.

[171] Russell H. Conwell, *Life of Charles H. Spurgeon* (Philadelphia: Edgewood Publishing, 1892), 116.
[172] Walker, *The Excellent Benjamin Keach*.

Conclusion: Restoration, Revolution, and Identity

The three themes of Keach's Baptist identity were clear in all the stages of his career. The first, Protestant Orthodoxy, has been evident in all five chapters. In 1664, Keach tried to defend himself during trial by explaining the scriptural basis for his beliefs, while Baptist confessions of faith and polemical writings about believer's baptism did the same for the Baptists as a group. In the 1670s, Keach and other Baptists sought to emphasize their orthodox understandings of scripture, soteriology, and Christology (drawn from the Westminster Confession of 1646), against the errors of their their Quaker opponents in all three areas. In the 1680s, his eschatological analysis drew upon reputable Protestant writers like Pierre Jurieu to provide a familiar identification of the papal Antichrist. Establishing standards about forms of worship and salvation were Keach's most enduring concern in the 1690s. In the eighteenth century the *History of the English Baptists* attempted to locate the origins of the Baptists, and those of their beliefs about baptism, among the primitive church and the proto-Protestant protagonists of John Foxe's history.

The experience of persecution, too, was evident throughout Keach's life. It defined Baptists' experiences in the 1660s, not least Keach's through his own performance of martyrdom at the assizes. It likely motivated the Baptists' efforts to distance themselves from Quakers in the 1670s. It defined Keach's depiction of sin and eschatology in the 1680s, with the persecuted Christian providing the narrative of experiences for Sion, Godliness and the Soul in his allegories. Even well after his death, Keach's experience of persecution and martyrdom was held up as a prime example, while the Baptists as a group were written into Protestant martyrology.

Finally, Keach's eschatological focus, though it was less often the focus of his writings, provided the basic framework through which he understood and interacted with the world around him. Even where Antichrist and judgement day did not explicitly come into the equation, the spectre of anti-Christian popery would frequently raise its head to characterize Quakers, Arminians, and internal debates between Baptists. Eschatology also provided helpful signposts throughout Keach's life and afterwards. He made sense of persecution in the 1660s with *Zion in Distress*, and the eschatological content of his primer was among those elements that caused Hyde to denounce him as a Fifth Monarchist. The conflicts and promises of his worldview came to fruition with the political crises and revolution of the 1680s, and Keach readily depicted them in eschatological terms. And Crosby's history, indebted to Foxe and Bale's basic narrative, though shorn of any apocalyptic expectations, closed the circle on the eschatological in the Baptists' self-portraits.

While these three themes have been depicted separately here, they were in many ways interconnected. Keach's eschatology drew support from the experience of persecution, and in turn it provided explanation and meaning to the suffering of the Baptists. Drawing on a sense of shared Protestant orthodoxy and identity was a method through which Keach and other Baptists would appeal for toleration in the face of persecution, and make common cause with others in the face of popery and Antichrist. The religious errors of Keach's opponents, finally, were not seen as mere mistakes. With each misstep came the prospect of popery. None of these elements existed in a vacuum, and in Keach's view they were all part of a single, coherent worldview. That this work

refers to the three elements separately is, perhaps, to create artificial distinctions, though it does provide some clarity of terms.

If none of the three themes under discussion existed in a vacuum, neither did Keach's Baptist identity as a whole. As must be clear by this point, this identity was shaped and reinforced at every step along the way by the context of the post-Restoration era. The period, and the events with which Keach and his coreligionists were faced, played an important role in shaping the identity they made for themselves. It was not an accident of history that Baptists found themselves depicted as radical sectaries, Fifth Monarchists, and rebels in the 1660s, but rather a result of the Civil Wars and Interregnum, with which Baptists were so readily associated. The period of reaction under the Cavalier Parliament, the Act of Uniformity, and other political developments of the 1660s cannot have helped but set the tone for the rest of Keach's career. Having his first book burned while he was placed in the pillory must have left him with a lasting wariness towards the prospect of further intolerance. And, being faced with such a state of affairs after the relative religious freedom and high expectations of the mid-century in which he came to adulthood, the return of the established church must have seemed dramatic indeed.

Faced with such apparent persecution, sporadic though it may have been, Keach's self-presentation shifted appropriately. The context of the Restoration provided for him a role, as a persecuted Christian, which informed his writing throughout the period. Likewise, Keach's concern with carnal forms and the temptations of the world could only have been exacerbated by the rule of a sexually licentious "Merry Monarch," which brought with it such playwrights and poets as Rochester, George Etherege, and Aphra

Behn. These sorts of anxieties could only be confirmed when the Popish Plot, Exclusion Crisis, and Revolution each in turn demonstrated the threat of the Roman Antichrist, the resistance of English Protestantism, and the promised deliverance of God's appointed, Protestant champion in William III. While none of this is to say that Keach's conception of Baptist identity was the exclusive product of political developments from 1660 to 1688, it certainly bore the marks of that specific historical context.

With respect to Keach's sense of orthodoxy, of course the basics of his belief in Calvinist soteriology, Believer's Baptism, and the authority of the scriptures were not simply a product of the Restoration. Indeed these fundamentals remained more or less unchanged throughout the period and are readily found among the present-day descendants of the English Baptists. What the Restoration context did help to shape was the manner in which this Baptist orthodoxy was articulated. While contemporaries like Roger L'Estrange depicted Baptists as radicals and revolutionaries, individuals like Keach were far from considering themselves anything of the sort. Instead, the London congregations in their apologia and confessions of faith made it clear that they saw themselves as well within the main stream of Protestantism. They did this moreover, by expressing their adherence to fundamentals of soteriology, Christology, and scripture, making it clear not only what they were but what they were not.

What the Baptists were not, by their own description, were Quakers or Roman Catholics. Unsurprisingly, then, these figures reappeared on a number of occasions as stock figures against which Keach defined proper beliefs. Popery, on the one hand, represented the temptations of the flesh, the errors of formalism, and the false promise of sacraments, indulgence, and human institutions. Quakerism, on the other hand, brought

with it the misguided concept of the light within, and rejected not only ordinances and forms of worship, but with it the authority of the scriptures themselves. Rather than being part of the radical branch of dissent, as they had been made out to be, Keach and other Baptists saw themselves charting a careful course between the twin dangers of Quaker fanaticism and Popish superstition, two obstacles to which they were particularly sensitive in the climate of the Restoration.

In terms of Baptist self-representation and sense of identity, the emphasis on persecution in the writings of Keach and others owes a great deal to the specific historical context of the Restoration. While it has been a truism since Locke that compulsion is not an effective means of changing dissenting beliefs, for Keach and the other Baptists the attempts to compel them towards conformity actually helped to confirm their sense of their own righteousness. Owing both to their reading of the scriptures, as well as to other works like Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, the suffering of the saints was only to be expected. In terms of Keach's own eschatological framework, and his belief in an imminent confrontation between the forces of good and evil, persecution of Christians was not only understandable, it was necessary. In a sense, then, the level of sporadic persecution that Baptists faced during the Restoration helped to reaffirm and solidify Keach's sense that they were in the right.

While the immediate experience of persecution subsided in the 1690s and later, this experience would continue to feature prominently in the histories of the Baptists, beginning with Stinton and Crosby. What had been an eschatological turning point for Keach became for his successors a celebrated heroic age of dissent in which the Baptists bravely faced the worst of the persecution. While the Test Act remained as a limitation

against dissenters, by the time of Crosby's history the high dudgeon and militant expectation that characterized Keach's writing was nowhere to be found. Crosby was no less indebted to Foxe's history than Keach, but while his eschatological account of the Reformation continued to provide a vital framework, any actual expectation of apocalyptic conflict had receded. Perhaps this was due to the shift from one generation to the next, or perhaps Britain under the Hanoverians was simply less conducive to eschatological interpretation. In either case, while the basic narrative remained the same, Keach's eschatology became simple history in Crosby's hands. The Restoration would loom large in that history, but its significance was no longer what Keach had made it out to be.

One important observation throughout the entire scope of this study is the extent to which much of what these Baptists did or wrote was done as a *response*. They responded to hostile depictions, to persecution, to political developments, and to debate with other dissenters. While they were not simply the product of circumstances, much of what we have been discussing in terms of Keach's Baptist identity was at least in part a reaction. Identity was not merely internal, or based exclusively on the Baptists themselves. It was also a question of how they presented themselves to others, and where they located themselves with respect to other groups. It was an issue not only of how they saw themselves, but how they believed themselves to be seen by others. Baptist claims of moderation and orthodoxy, defensives responses to persecution, and emphasis on an eschatological narrative told Baptists a story about themselves. But it was also intended, especially through polemic, confessions, and apologia, to tell that story to other English Protestants as well.

What we are ultimately left with is a Baptist identity that was responsive to changing circumstances and flexible with respect to what aspects it emphasized at any given time. While the theme of persecution was more obvious at the height of the 1660s, and Keach's eschatology was most pronounced in the 1680s, orthodoxy and issues of worship and ordinances took centre stage in the 1690s. Moving on into the eighteenth century, the premium placed on eschatology had diminished in Crosby's history, though the centrality of persecution to Baptist identity endured. In spite of a basic level of consistency, an identity that was often articulated in response to events was not static, and adapted over the course of time.

If the precise contours of Baptist identity were not set in stone, the Restoration provided a mould that gave this identity, at least for a time, a particular shape. While fundamentals like Believer's Baptism and soteriology endured, Keach's idea of Protestant orthodoxy was very much directed towards an appeal to mainline protestant values in the context of Restoration nonconformity and anti-popery. While the importance of persecution and toleration would endure in Baptist histories and rhetoric, the particular experiences of Keach and his contemporaries gave immediacy to his advocacy that was specific to his time and place. And eschatology has always been an aspect of Christianity, but the urgency with Keach wrote about the topic was completely shaped by the political crises and European context of the late seventeenth century. These factors had a formative impact on Keach's conception of a Baptist identity. His theology remains recognizable to a twenty-first century Baptist, but the lived experience and texture of a Baptist in Keach's work was very much a Restoration identity.

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