

ONE GOD
IN ONE PERSON ONLY :

AND

JESUS CHRIST

A

**BEING DISTINCT FROM GOD,
DEPENDENT UPON HIM FOR HIS EXISTENCE,
AND HIS VARIOUS POWERS ;
MAINTAINED AND DEFENDED.**

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“ And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel ; the Lord thy God is one Lord—And the Scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth ; for there is *one* God, and there is none other but HE : And Jesus saw that he answered him *discreetly*. ”

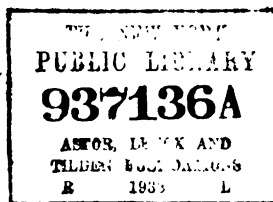
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INTRODUCTION.



IN every period since the appearance of the Son of God upon earth, Christians, with his gospel open before them, have differed exceedingly respecting the doctrines it contains. Happy would it have been, had they mutually indulged to each other that liberty of speculation, which each has assumed to himself, and, like brethren in the same cause, walked charitably together, so far as they were agreed. But alas ! this has never been the case. From the beginning they have exchanged the standard of Christ for that of Paul, Cephas, or Apollos, and raised those weapons against each other, which ought to have been directed against the common enemy. Scarcely a speculative doctrine of the scriptures, which has not, in one age or another, been branded as heresy. The dissenter from the prevalent creed has always been denounced an apostate from the faith ; though, according to decrees of councils of the preceding or subsequent age, those only were heretics, who subjected him to condemnation. Thus every change of established sentiment has produced a new order of heretics ; and, while orthodoxy has degenerated into damnable heresy, heresy itself has, ultimately, grown up into the orthodox faith !

NOR has this opposition arisen in consequence of a difference respecting the essential doctrines of christianity. The most trivial points have been decreed essential ; and he, whose understanding could not follow the decisions of the majority, however his christian deportment may have assimilated in all piety and virtue with the great Pattern of righteousness, has not only been de-

nounced an heretical apostate, but his person has been delivered over to the tormenters.

THE eastern and western empires of the church have, each in their turn, poured forth the thunders of excommunication. Luther and Calvin, and all the Reformers, were heretics in their day. They also hereticated others, who differed from them. By the church of England the Puritans, our ancestors, were persecuted and driven from their native country. No sooner were they established in power, than, forgetting the rights of private judgment, they persecuted the Quakers and Baptists: They deprive them of citizenship and banished them their territories.

FOR no other crime than supposed error of opinion, more professing christians, than would people half these States, have either been burnt at the stake, perished on the rack, or been inhumanly butchered. And although in the present period, the benign influence of science and civilization has so far ameliorated the human mind, that the persecution of fire and sword ceases to destroy our race, yet, even now, the professing brethren of one common Lord, the avowed disciples of the Prince of peace, maintain a warm and bitter contest, and sullenly close against each other the doors of christian fellowship.

WHENCE come wars and fightings among you, ye advocates of the mild and peaceful religion of Jesus? Do they not originate in your depraved lusts? Can ye seriously amuse yourselves with the idea, that such is the earnest contention for the faith once delivered to the saints to which you are exhorted by that inspiration, which commands all professing christians to *receive one another, not to doubtful disputations, but as Christ hath received us to the glory of God?* Is not the true and all important faith, a faith, which worketh by love, which purifieth the heart, overcometh the world, and bringeth forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness? What else is that system of moral virtue, exemplified by the lively practice of its glorious Author, and published to the ancient saints, through the medium of Apostles, as the essence of all true religion? To this faith his followers are never to be indifferent. For the maintainance and propagation of

INTRODUCTION.

this they are always earnestly, *no matter how earnestly*, to contend.

HAD the flaming zeal of the church been directed to this fundamental point, speculation would have disappeared as the pole star of controversy, and brotherly love, instead of being abolished, would have been made to abound. The lifeless and formal pharisee, the dry systematic, destitute of the love of God, the traitorous disturber of Zion's peace, and the enemy of the Lord Jesus by wicked works, would have been the victims, the only victims, sacrificed to the preservation of gospel faith.

BUT whence do christians differ in their speculations? Shall we say, "Through hatred of the truth?" Are we then to suppose, that God has given over to blindness of mind, that they all may be damned, those, who deny ungodliness with every worldly lust; who strenuously advocate and practise the holiness of the Redeemer; and carefully preserve themselves pure and unspotted from the world!

O CHARITY, thou offspring of God, who hopest all things, who thinkest no evil, and coverest a multitude of sins, divine and heavenly CHARITY, fill our bosoms with thy blessed influence, and lend thy friendly mantle to hide the infirmities of our race. And do thou, celestial CANDOR, dispel the mists which obscure the view of our understandings, that, in the light of unclouded day, we may discern the true cause of discordant opinions among the followers and advocates of christian truth.

NOT only is there a great difference in the intellectual powers of men, but equally great is the difference in the opportunities of cultivating these powers. Some are allowed to spend their whole life in ransacking the stores of science, and every advantage, which can be desired for mental improvement, is enjoyed to the full. Others, whose natural abilities are equally great, are placed in circumstances altogether unfavorable. Improper instruction in early youth confines the genius of thousands, and lays it under embarrassment, which operates through life to retard their progress; while millions are compelled to constant and unremitted toil, to furnish themselves and their families with daily bread.

INTRODUCTION.

CIRCUMSTANCES, merely accidental, often give a particular direction to the human mind, inspire it with a certain train of thought, and infix first principles, which, though erroneous, become established, and have important influence upon all its subsequent reasonings and decisions.

LANGUAGE is highly ambiguous. Very numerous are the significations of a single word. Its various use is far better understood by some than by others, and minds, equally candid, obtain very different ideas from the same expression.

ACQUAINTANCE with the manners and customs of antiquity is, many times, essential to a just interpretation of an ancient writer. Of these customs some are ignorant, and therefore rendered incapable of developing a sentiment, which is wrapped in language alluding to a peculiar ceremony or practice of the author's time.

FIGURE or metaphor, though common to all languages, was more especially the manner in which the early eastern writers delighted to express their ideas. The literal construction is often very different from the metaphorical. Hence the same passage will convey a different sentiment, according to the mode of interpretation, which men adopt.

THE doctrines of scripture are not delivered in a systematic form, classed under distinct and separate heads. They are promiscuously scattered throughout the sacred volume. And, though the essential features of the scheme are so prominent as to strike the eye of even a careless observer, yet other doctrines often arise from a history, from an argument, from an extensive comparison of similar phraseology, from the general scope and design of the inspired writer, from the circumstances under which he wrote, and a consideration of the characters whom he addressed. Concerning all these things a fallible man, though ever so candid, is liable to misjudge.

FINALLY, Such is the unbounded influence of *Education*, that it operates like a constitutional mechanism upon the mind, and authoritatively dictates its decisions. The child is brought up to know and to feel the supremacy of the parent, to depend upon his instructions as originat-

INTRODUCTION.

ing in superior knowledge, to place the utmost confidence in his declarations as undoubtedly true, and to exercise implicit faith in his religious formularies as unquestionably correct. Even before he has made any proficiency in letters, he is taught the principles of his instructor as being the revelation of God. Through the several periods of youth these are continually impressed, both by precept and example, upon his mind ; and he is led, without understanding the grounds and reasons of other sects, to look upon those, who differ from his parents, in the same manner that they do. Some he pities as ignorantly stupid : Others he abhors as grossly depraved.

INDEED, when arrived to the age of manhood, not one in a thousand can be said to think for himself. He still reverences his ancestors, and their opinions sway his mind. Nor, with all his candor, is he likely to judge otherwise, though they may be ever so erroneous ; seeing he has been always instructed, not only into a belief of the truth of their opinions, but also into their particular construction of such scriptures, as are adduced for the support of these opinions.

DOES he become a theological student, and enter on preparation for the ministry ? Neither, in this case, is he at all liberated from the influence of education ; but still continues a subject of its controlling power. He becomes a student under some eminent divine, for whose piety, abilities, and orthodoxy, both he and his parents entertain the highest respect. The Presbyterian does not commit his son to the tuition of an Episcopalian Bishop ; nor does the Baptist venture him in the hands of a Presbyterian Doctor. The rigid Calvinist furnishes no employment for the Arminian instructor ; nor are the Arian or Socinian academies composed of the sons of Athanasian Trinitarians. The mind of the well disposed youth is still to continue in the channel of his ancestors. He is still to be loaded with the incumbrance of education, however erroneous, notwithstanding his age would capacitate him for independent thought, and indulge him in his own reflections. While under the care of his respected instructor, he is furnished with

such authors, as ingeniously defend his peculiar sentiments. He is taught to contend earnestly for the creed of his teacher as being *the faith once delivered to the saints*; and, having examined one side of a question only, and been inspired with sufficient prejudice against every opponent, he is sent forth to preach and to defend the doctrines in which he was BORN !

COME hither ye Calvinists, ye Arminians, ye Presbyterians, ye Baptists, ye Episcopalians, and all other denominations of any long standing, and testify against this statement if ye can. How muchsoever ye differ in other points, here ye fully agree. Ye all proclaim yourselves the legitimate sons of your fathers, and trace back your pedigree through many generations. Well disposed towards you all, I thank you for your testimony. Notwithstanding your differences in points of speculation, I feel no necessity of charging depravity upon you, so long as charity can furnish a more rational account. As denominations, I see in you all many excellent virtues. I observe your unanimous acknowledgment of but *one God, of whom are all things ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things* ; accompanied with many other grand articles of the christian scheme : And the reasons, exhibited above, do not allow me to raise against any one sect of professing christians the stone of condemnation.

Is such catholicism infidelity ? It is then infidelity of a peculiar cast. Were it but universally prevalent, the christian kingdom would no longer be rent in sunder, by broils and dissensions, by wars and fightings. No longer would it be a house divided against itself. We should be the friendly brethren of one common Lord ; we should show ourselves the subjects of the Prince of peace. In the unity of this spirit, prejudice and party, bigotry and superstition, those inveterate enemies of the church, would be immolated for their crimes. Zion would be covered with a coat of mail ; and the union of her forces would render her invincible. Infidelity, deprived of his weapons of war, would shrink from the unequal contest ; and the christian empire would soon extend her dominion to the ends of the earth.

BUT, through the absence of this catholicism, eighteen centuries have rolled upon the church, and each has found her destitute of the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Destitute of this, eighteen centuries more will roll on their history, and report her still, a family of contention.

MANKIND are depraved. Christians are not perfect. Popery will hold dominion in the human heart. The doctrine of infallibility is a doctrine of human nature ; and a disposition to make others bow to the decisions of our understanding, has always been, and still is, even in the church very generally prevalent. Hence, fierceness of spirit, virulent feelings, bitter reproach, and injurious treatment towards those who differ. Even the most eminent divines are but dull scholars in learning the equal rights of all understandings, and they are slow to grant to others that privilege of thinking, of which they are so tenacious themselves.

BUT by what authority does any man set himself up, as *the infallible expositor of the Scriptures* ? It is not disputed, that the Scriptures are the word of God, and the only test of doctrine. But they are written in human language, which admits of a variety of constructions. The difference of sentiment which prevails among christians arises not from a denial of the words of scripture, but from the different interpretation, which they put upon the same passage. This is the sole ground of all argument concerning doctrine. No one sect of christians pretends to dispute against what the Lord has really spoken. The grand question, which divides believers, is, What ideas does the Lord convey to our minds, by the language which he uses ? What construction or interpretation is to be put upon his words ?

AND who will say, that he *absolutely and infallibly* KNOWS his peculiar construction of the words of scripture to be correct ? Has any man in these days a secret revelation from God, declaring his interpretation to be perfect, and that of his neighbor to be erroneous ? Let him, who "vaunteth himself" in the style of infallibility, give evidence to his opponents of his divine inspiration in

INTRODUCTION.

this particular. Let him establish his infallibility, in the construction which he puts upon the language of scripture, by the authority of miracles. Then shall no man presume to differ. Then shall all come to this INFALLIBLE TEACHER for the true exposition of the sacred volume, and reverently style him "*our Master on earth.*"

For my own part, I am not ashamed publicly to acknowledge, what truth would compel every man to confess, that I belong to a race, whose understandings are fallible, and whose confident assurance is sometimes founded in mistake. Nor have I beheld the pious, the eminently learned, and the respectable multitude of my fellow christians advocating a different doctrine, without being disposed to pay suitable deference to their judgment. This consideration has delayed my decisions, and led me to examine, somewhat extensively, the grounds on which their judgment is professedly established. Whether I have weighed evidence with impartiality, God, the righteous judge of all, will determine.

ALL, however, that has been exhibited to my view by the most eminent advocates of the opposite scheme, has proved insufficient to retain conviction in my mind of the truth of preconceived opinions ; opinions powerfully supported by the influence of education, and by that mode of expounding the scriptures, which instruction had rendered familiar.

My sentiments becoming different, from those believed and avowed at my ordination, honesty compelled me frankly to declare them, notwithstanding the evils, which, the state of the times gave me to foresee, would undoubtedly be realized in consequence. I have not been disappointed.

THE publication of my sentiments gave umbrage to the Original Association of Ministers in the county of Windham ; and they proceeded to expel me, on this account, not only from their body, as a voluntary Association, but from all "*ministerial connexion.*"

It was my intention to have published a general statement of the manner in which this affair was brought to

its crisis: But, for certain reasons, which I did not sufficiently consider, it is at present withheld. I would only observe, that, by the decree of the Association, or any decrees which, *as a body of mere Ecclesiastics, without appointment from the churches, without their sanction, and without pursuing the regular discipline pointed out by our Lord*, they may assume the authority to make, I consider my good christian and ministerial standing not in the least degree impaired. Were they an Ecclesiastical court, known in the scriptures ; had they charged me with crime, with a breach of the divine law to mankind ; and were there any other kind of iniquity found cleaving to my garment, than that *I cannot see with their eyes, and perceive with their understandings* ; I might consider myself as affected by their decision. But, as the matter now stands, I feel the authority of the Lord Jesus still resting upon me, and shall not desert my ministerial office. They, and others who shall subscribe to their doings, may treat me according to their pleasure : There is One that judgeth between us. To HIM shall the appeal be made.

LEST some, who are unskilled in the languages, should think that we alter and set aside scripture, when in some instances we undertake to correct the English translation, and the common copy from which it is supposed that our translation is made, it may not be improper to state, in this place, the following facts, which are well known to the learned.

FOR nearly fifteen centuries after Christ, the art of printing was unknown. The scriptures, therefore, were disseminated and handed down from one generation to another, by writing. This method opens the door for mistake. No man could transcribe so large a volume, without being liable to leave out some words, syllables, or letters, and to put one word, syllable, or letter, for another. Accordingly it is well known, that all copies differ.

THERE is, also, another reason for their difference. Such has been the zeal for the support of peculiar opinions, that, in former ages, designing men have ventured to correct the word of God, both by expunging such passages as opposed their peculiar doctrine, and by inserting, here and there, such sentences as would testify in its favor. These corruptions have indeed been generally detected by their opponents : And we here see one advantage, arising to the church of God, from that difference of opinion, which has prevailed. The different sects have ever been spies upon each other ; and the scriptures have, in consequence, been handed down to us more pure than, otherwise, would have been the case. Still such corruptions are visible, by comparing together the various manuscripts which can be obtained ; the quotations of the antient Fathers whose works are preserved ; and the translations into different languages, in various periods of time, and regions of the world.

Now the method, in which our common copy, the Old and New Testaments in the original Hebrew and Greek, was formed, was, by collecting as many manuscripts, both ancient and modern, as could be obtained, ancient versions, and quotations by the Fathers, and considering that as the genuine reading, which, on the whole, appeared to the compilers the best attested, and the most

consistent with the context and general tenor of scriptural doctrine. Those, who performed this work, were however men of like infirmities with ourselves. They were honest good men ; but were no more infallible in their judgment, or destitute of prejudices, than others who are honest and good. They doubtless intended to do what was right, though they were liable to misjudge.

FURTHER ; the age in which they formed our common copy was not so enlightened as the present. Since their time criticism has become more perfect. Many manuscripts have been discovered of which they had no knowledge ; some of which are several hundreds of years more ancient, than any which they had.

MOREOVER ; our English translation is not made directly from the original ; but principally from the Latin Vulgate, which is itself a translation by Jerome, who lived in the fifth century. Our translators were, no doubt, honest and learned men, and have done very well in the main ; so that, in no doctrine of godliness or matter of christian practice, which is at all essential to salvation, can any man be led astray. Still however, they were fettered in consequence of rules, prescribed to them by King James ; and the translation is not so perfect, in every respect, as it might be.

FROM this statement, which no man of any information in these matters will call in question, it is plain, that we do not set aside the scriptures, by appealing to the original, and criticizing upon our present copy and translation. Nor is it any proof of the badness of our cause so to do, as some foolishly and ignorantly suggest. For such criticism is acknowledged, by the most respectable divines, both in Europe and this country, to be, many times, absolutely necessary to the elucidation of the holy scriptures. Our pious and venerable Fathers, who met at Saybrook in general assembly in 1708, to agree on articles of faith and a general plan of church government, say, under the eighth section concerning the holy scriptures, " The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of writing it,

“ was most generally known to the nations) being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are, therefore, authentic; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal unto them.”—Any man, therefore, who shall pretend, that, because we appeal to the original, we set aside the scriptures, or that such appeal to the original is proof that our cause is weak, does, in so doing, but expose his ignorance.

RESPECTING the method of coming to the knowledge of what the scriptures teach, these venerable divines say in section ninth, “ The infallible rule of interpretation of scripture, is the scripture itself; and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any scripture (which is not manifold but one) it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.” When, therefore, we refer to one part of scripture, in order to find out the meaning of another part, we ought not be accused of perverting and wresting the scriptures from their obvious sense. For what is obvious to one is not so to another; and may not be according to the design of the inspired penman; which is always best proved, by comparing the words and phrases in one place with the language which the Holy Ghost uses in other places.

HAVING made such introductory remarks as were deemed useful, the impartial attention of the public is requested, while, in the light of divine inspiration, we examine the important doctrine concerning God and Christ. The subject is, indeed, very extensive. Multitudes of passages are concerned with it, and various are the constructions of these passages by different writers. It is impossible to go into a full consideration of all, that has been and may be urged, without adding volume to volume. We shall confine ourselves therefore, to the principal points and passages in controversy, and exhibit some of the main reasons only, on which our opinions are grounded. We shall not indeed confine ourselves to the arguments in favor of our particular doc-

trine. Sensible that no one can be prepared to decide a question, unless the witnesses on each side are allowed to give in their testimony, we feel it incumbent on us, as we would wish for the prevalence of truth rather than error, to afford the cause of our opponents a fair and candid hearing.

WE have not indeed the vanity to suppose, that, in this late period of the world, any thing new can be urged by us on the subject. It is altogether probable the same arguments have been adduced, and been as well, if not much better stated by others, who have gone before us. Our reading having been almost wholly confined to authors in favor of the Trinity and Deity of Christ, we are not able to judge how far we have, in our defence, adopted the arguments commonly urged by writers on our side of the question. A diligent study of the sacred scriptures has convinced us of the truth of the opinions we have adopted, and have furnished arguments, which appear to us to militate decidedly against the scheme we oppose.

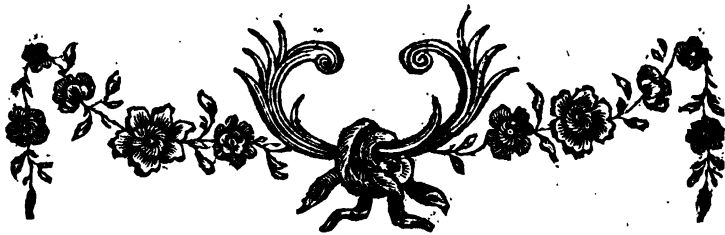
IN the following treatise we have not thought it proper to bring into view peculiarities which we may entertain, and which distinguish us from any denominations of those, who deny the supreme and independent Deity of Christ and the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity. Seeing the only question of primary importance, is "*Whether the commonly received doctrine concerning Christ and the Trinity be true or false,*" we shall confine our arguments wholly to this single point.

THE advocates for the supreme Deity of Christ strenuously insist on his being constituted by two natures in one person ; *i. e.* that he is both human and divine ; not a human person *and* a divine person, but *a divine person only* with an annexed, impersonal, human nature ; which, as it never existed separately from the Deity, but was created in union with him, cannot be considered as a distinct human being, or a distinct human person. Under shelter of this plan, no arguments, in proof of the inferiority of the person of Christ to the supreme God, will reach them ; because, say they, the passages of scripture,

which speak of him as inferior to the supreme God, relate only to his human nature.

LET it therefore be our object to shew, in the first place, that the passages and considerations, alledged in favor of the supreme and independent Deity of Christ, do not establish such doctrine concerning him. As however it is impossible, to bring into view and discant upon every passage, that our opponents urge to this point, without greatly trespassing on the patience of the public, and swelling what is intended to be a brief dissertation into a large treatise, we purpose to select those only, which are viewed the most decisive, and on which the greatest dependence is generally had for the support of their doctrine.

THE principal considerations, urged in proof of the supreme and independent divinity of Christ, are the following.



SECTION I.

CHRIST, our opponents affirm, is declared to be the great CREATOR of all worlds. Creation is exclusively the work of the supreme and independent God. Christ, therefore, must be the supreme and independent God.

The passage, which stands first on the list under this head, is, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. The world was made by him. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.**

However strange and almost unintelligible this language may appear to an English reader, it was very plain to the Jews and others, of the age in which this gospel was written. The term *λογος*, here rendered Word, was much used in that day by both Jewish and Heathen Philosophers. By Philo it was employed to express, what Plato expressed by *νος*, mind or intellect. The Greeks generally used it in two senses, for both reason and speech. "The Stoics made use of this term, when they affirmed that all things were formed by reason or the divine wisdom, in opposition to the Epicurean system, which taught that the world came into being by chance, or was made without reason."† The Gnostic sentiment, concerning the creation, was, that the world was not made by the supreme God, but by an inferior principle or agent, a distinct being from God, which some of them denominated *λογος*

* John i. 1, 3, 10, 14.

† M'Knights' Harm. in loco.

Word. Calvin considers it as expressive of the *divine wisdom*. In his comment upon this passage he represents those, who deny the strict eternity of the word, as *depriving God of his wisdom*; and further says, "If it be unlawful to conceive of God as destitute of his wisdom, it becomes us to acknowledge, that the origin of the Word is to be sought only in the eternal wisdom of God."*

It is not improbable, that the Evangelist in this passage alludes to the eighth of Proverbs, where *Wisdom* is personified as a *female*, taking the style of *understanding*, giving instruction to mankind, dwelling with her sister *Prudence*, tracing back her existence to an eternal habitation with Jehovah, and representing herself as rejoicing always before him, and as having her delight with the sons of men. It may not be impertinent to introduce, here, this very interesting representation of divine wisdom. "Doth not wisdom cry and understanding put forth her voice. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you O men I call, and my voice is unto the sons of men. I wisdom dwell with prudence. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old—I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my de-

* Qua in re non tantum Filio Dei atrocem faciunt injuriam, sed eterno ejus Patri quoque, quem sapientia sua privant. Si Deum absque sua sapientia imaginari nefas est, fateri oportet non alibi querendam sermonis originem, quam in eterna Dei sapientia. Calvin in loco.

lights were with the sons of men." By the *λογος* Word, then, we are to understand *the divine wisdom*, regulating the power or energy of God in the work of creation.

Accordingly, in all the succeeding verses, the pronoun should be rendered IT, and not *he* ; which may be done with the greatest propriety. It is so translated by Dr. Campbell and others.

The work of creation, therefore, is ascribed not to Christ, but to that Word only, which was in the beginning, which was a property of God, and is defined, by the Evangelist, to be God himself.

Whatever may be the union of the Word to the flesh, this union, it is plain, took place thousands of years posterior to the creation of the world. Therefore it cannot be said, that the Word made flesh, or an union of divine and human natures constituting the person of Christ, performed this work. This work was accomplished by the Word alone, before the existence of any flesh, to which it could be so united, as to constitute one complex person in two diverse natures.

Neither is it any more proper to assert that of Christ, which is true of the Word only before it was made flesh, than to assert that Paul created the universe, because the divine power, which accomplished this work, resided afterwards in Paul, and, by him, performed a resurrection of the dead. The word, when disconnected from human nature, was not Jesus Christ, whatever it may have been afterwards : For, by Jesus Christ, our opponents understand not a divine nature only, nor a human nature only, but *a divine and human nature united in one person ; i. e. the Word made flesh*. That *the Word made flesh* created the worlds this passage does not teach.

But does not the Evangelist plainly teach, that the Word is a distinct person in the Godhead ? and that this divine person afterwards became Jesus Christ ?

It does not appear to us that he teaches any such thing. When he says *the Word was with God, and the same was in the beginning with God*, he intends, by the preposition, *with*, what is intended by it in the following passage, *With the ancient is wisdom—with him is wisdom and*

*strength.** That is, these things belong to him as properties of his nature. The idea is, that the Word *belongs to God, is a property of God.* Accordingly the Evangelist, proceeding in his definition, says, *the word was God, the Deity himself.*

This interpretation is put beyond doubt, by a recurrence to the original. The Greek preposition *προς*, here rendered *with*, is used ninety-six times by John in his gospel, and is, in no instance, used to denote personal residence one with another. Instead of this, he always uses a different preposition, *παρά, ὑπὲρ*, &c. when he would express the idea of one residing in company with another. This is the case in this very chapter. *They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode παρά with him that day.†* Nay it cannot be pretended that John, in any of his writings, ever uses the preposition *προς* to denote the personal residence of one with another, excepting in two instances only; ‡ which however are as questionable, as in the passage before us. And, even there also, he affords evidence against such a construction, by introducing into the context a different preposition *ὑπὲρ*, when he would suggest personal residence one with another. *That, which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship ὑπὲρ with us, and truly our fellowship is ὑπὲρ with the Father and ὑπὲρ with his Son Jesus Christ.§* This is the preposition used by John, when he represents Christ speaking of the residence of the Father with him, notwithstanding the disciples should leave him alone. *Behold the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is ὑπὲρ with me.||*

The declaration, *the Word was with God*, evidently denotes therefore, that the word *belongs to God, or is a property of the divine nature.* Manifest is it, that the doctrine of personal distinction in God, which our opponents take

* Job, xii. 12, 13. — † Verse 39. — ‡ I. John, i. 2, and ii. 1. — § I. John i. 3. || John xvi. 32.

for granted, as clearly taught in this passage, is without foundation.

But does not this interpretation render the Evangelist tautological? Be it so if you please; What then? It is the character of this writer to repeat the same thing in different words, over and over again. This method runs through all his writings. We need go no further than the second and third verses for example to this point.

The Logos or Word was, we have observed, a term often in the mouths of the philosophers of that day, and was used by them to denote very different things. John undertakes to give a scriptural definition of it. He asserts the *eternity* of the Word, in opposition to those, who held it to be created. He asserts *its inherence in the Deity*, in opposition to those, who held it to be an *Eon* emanated from God, and several grades below the infinite Supreme. And he asserts *its numerical unity*, or *its identity with God*, in opposition to those, who held it to be a distinct personality.

This famous passage is far from aiding the cause of our opponents, notwithstanding the stress they have been accustomed to lay upon it, as an unanswerable objection to our scheme. For we may justly remark, in addition to what has already been observed, that no instance can be produced, either from the scriptures or any other writings, in which the preposition, *προς*, *with*, is ever used to denote the personal residence together of less than *two distinct beings*. But to give such an interpretation to the word, *προς*, *with*, would render it necessary to suppose two eternal beings, who have always resided in company, each of whom is a supreme God; making, when added together, more Gods than one.

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. But does John say, that the Word was so made flesh, as to assume humanity into such connexion as to render it a part of God, another nature belonging to his person? He immediately illustrates the idea, he would suggest to the mind of the reader. Here, however, the translation is deficient, and deprives the English reader of the illustration, which the Evangelist gives. The word, *ἐσθλὸν*

rendered *dwelt*, signifies more than mere residence. It is derived from σκηνή a tent or a tabernacle. The Evangelist, therefore, points out the *mode* or *manner* of the Word's dwelling among us. The meaning of the phrase, and a correct translation of it, is, *The Word became flesh; yea it dwelt as in a tabernacle*. Accordingly the theme σκηνωω, signifies to erect or pitch a tent : And σκηνωτης or σκηνιτης signifies one, who dwells in a tent or tabernacle.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the Evangelist, by the use of the word, ἐσκηνώσεν *dwelt*, meant to explain what is to be understood by the Word's being made or becoming flesh ; to wit, that he dwelt in the man Christ Jesus as his tabernacle, residing in him as one resides in a tent or a tabernacle.*

And pray what kind of residence, or indwelling, is this ? When men dwell in tents or tabernacles, do they take them into personal union with themselves ? Or is the tabernacle considered to be *an additional nature*, and rendering them *complex personalities* ? How did God dwell in the tabernacle of Moses ? Did he take it into personal union with himself ? Or was he considered, in consequence, as possessing not only a divine, but an *inanimate* nature also ? By dwelling in the ancient tabernacle, he made it the place where he peculiarly manifested himself, exhibited his power, and proclaimed his will to his people.

This we take to be a plain intelligible account of the

* The word ἐσκηνώσεν has attracted the attention of numerous commentators and translators, both ancient and modern. The Vulgate, Arias Montanus, Erasmus, Zurich, and Castalio, render it *Had his tabernacle*. In the same manner it is rendered by most foreign versions. Wesley and Wynne render it *tabernacled*.* So does Alexander. Dodridge renders it *pitched his tabernacle*. Campbell says the primitive signification of the verb σκηνωω, from σκηνή tent or tabernacle, is doubtless *to pitch a tent or dwell in a tent*. Chemnitius, in his harmony, says, that "the evangelist alludes to the prediction, Zechariah, ii. 10. "Lo I come and will dwell κατὰ σκηνωσιν (will pitch my tabernacle) in the midst of thee ; for he uses the significant word σκηνωσις, which signifies to dwell in a tabernacle, as, in ancient times, exiled strangers and the Patriarchs dwelled in tabernacles." Hammond renders it thus ; " *he had his tabernacle pitched among us ;*" and considers the flesh, as the tabernacle in which the Word dwelt.

It should also be observed, that, though this word, both by the LXX and heathen writers, is sometimes used to signify mere residence, yet it is very questionable whether it be ever used in this manner in the New Testament. We do not believe, though some assert to the contrary, that it has any other meaning than the one we have given above.

* Vide Campbell in loc.

union of God to the man Jesus Christ. For surely the idea of dwelling, as in a tabernacle, in the flesh or man Christ Jesus, has no tendency to lead common christians into the belief, that the evangelist would assert that the Word took the human nature into personal union, in such a manner as to destroy the human personality of the man Christ Jesus, or to constitute one complex being with two natures, though infinitely diverse from each other, yet so hypostatically united, as that the actions of each are predicable of a divine person only. If there be any such doctrine, it is certainly not contained in this passage.

Another passage, urged to prove that Christ is the great Creator, is, "*For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him ; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**"

It is readily acknowledged, that, if passages of scripture be detached from their connexion and the design of the sacred writer, we can easily prove any thing however absurd. This, though a very general method of quoting scripture, is not the way to the knowledge of the truth. Would we obtain this knowledge, the connexion, together with the design of the writer, must always be kept in view.

For the elucidation of this passage, the following things are worthy of notice.

The Apostle introduces his subject, by giving thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ *τω θεω και πατρι*, on account of their faith in Christ and love to all the saints, of which he had heard. But, *if Christ have a God above him*, as is here taken for granted, then he cannot be the great Creator of all things ; for he must himself have been created by his God and Father. The Apostle, having asserted this, cannot be supposed to assert, in the passage before us, that Christ is the Supreme Creator of all things, unless we would suppose, either that there are two Creators, one of whom is the God and Creator of the other, or that the Apostle, in a few verses

* Col. i. 16, 17.

succeeding, contradicts what he had asserted just before. Neither of which suppositions can be admitted.

Further, The subject of the whole chapter is plainly a new creation or a moral reformation of the Colossians and others, and a representation of the personage, by whom this grand event is accomplished, *the Son of God in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.* In verse 15, he proceeds to point out his exalted character. *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature.* Here it is to be observed, that, when speaking of his exalted dignity and glory, the Apostle does not say he is God himself, but *the image of the invisible God.* Now with no propriety can it be said, that the image of a thing is the very thing itself, of which it is declared to be the image. Image suggests merely the idea of *resemblance* or *likeness*; never the identical thing to which it is likened. To suppose the Apostle intends, as some imagine, to assert here the supreme divinity of Christ, is to impute to him the most improper language.

By *an image* we all understand a portrait, a picture, or that which bears resemblance to the person or thing, of which it is an image. Thus, in a looking glass, the person, standing before it, sees his image, a form which shows forth, as far as an image can do, what he is himself. It pictures his size, proportion, and various features. This is what we always understand by an image.

Therefore, when the Apostle says, that Christ is the image of the invisible or unseen God, he declares him to be that personage, who makes known, illustrates, or conveys an idea of God, who cannot himself be seen by mortal eye, and is manifested only through some medium.

Christ, then, is the image of the invisible God, inasmuch as in him dwelt the divine fulness bodily. God dwelt in him as it were in a body, making him the medium of manifestation, as the body is the medium through which the character, purposes, and powers of the soul, which are invisible, are exhibited to the view and understanding of our fellow men. He is the image of God, as being able, at all times, to command the dead from their graves; to still the boisterous and contending elements

of nature with a word ; to multiply small portions of food to a sufficiency for thousands ; to confound all the wisdom of the wise ; to lay open the hidden counsels of heaven ; to search the secret recesses of the human soul ; to appoint Apostles as messengers of his will, and convey to them authority, not only to publish the counsel of the Most High, but to sanction their declaration of his counsel by astonishing and stupendous miracles.

In these particulars and a multitude of others, we behold *an Image of God*, a man, who seems to possess as it were the very attributes of Divinity, and who displays the divine perfections to the world. God himself, like the intelligent soul, is invisible. We can never discern him, as an acting, speaking character. But, in the Son of God, we behold before us, a being actually exerting the powers and speaking forth the counsels of the Deity ; just as in a well drawn portrait, we behold the features, dress, and complexion of an absent unseen friend.

Is not this what we are to understand by Christ's being the image of the invisible God ? What else can we understand by it ? An image, we all know, is not, cannot be, that identical being or thing, of which it is an image. To suppose this would be confounding language, and setting aside all distinction of ideas. An image in the glass, or which is drawn by the curious limner, though its resemblance be exceedingly exact, and though it would seem, at first view, the very being it represents, yet, upon nearer inspection, proves to be distinct from the being, which it illustrates.

The first born of every creature.

The original word, *πρωτοτοκος* rendered *firstborn*, frequently occurs, both in the Septuagint and New Testament ; but is, in no instance, applied to an independent self-existent being, or so employed as to suggest the idea of these qualities.

It is affirmed, however, that the word signifies, in this place, "*born before all creation*;" and exempts him, to whom it is applied, from being himself a part of the creation ; that, had the Apostle intended to represent Jesus Christ as the first begotten creature, he would have used the word *πρωτογενιστον*, which is limited to this idea.

But this is a criticism without foundation in scripture ; and, we believe it would not be hazarding much to say, without example in the Greek language.

*And all the first born in the land of Egypt shall die ; from the first born of Pharaoh, that sitteth upon the throne, to the first born of the maid servant, that sitteth behind the mill ; and all the first born of beasts.** Here the same word, rendered first born in the passage in question, is used four times ; and signifies *the oldest of the family*, or the one *which is begotten the first and included among others, who are also born*. It would be absurd to consider the first born of Pharaoh, as one *born before* Pharaoh ; that the first born of beasts is one *born before* the beasts, and not included in the class of beasts. Again, it is said, *The first born of thy sons shalt thou give to me.†* But how absurd to suppose, that these first born were not to be of the number of the sons, over whom they have the title of first born !

Whether therefore the Apostle, in the passage in question, mean, by applying the word *first born* to Christ, to represent him *the first created being* in the universe, as some contend ; or a creature of *the first rank and eminence in the moral system*, as is affirmed by others, is not material to the argument : For either interpretation supposes him to be *but a glorious and exalted creature*. The account is plain. It is not in the power of metaphysics, or of previously adopted systems, to set the argument aside. If the Apostle intended to represent him the first born in point of existence, then the most that can be made of it is, that he is the *oldest* of all creation. If the Apostle intended to speak of his preeminent rank, then the most that can be made of it is, that he is *the most illustrious* of all creation. Adopt which construction you please, the conclusion is the same : He is one among the number of creatures ; and, therefore, *not* the supreme and independent Creator of all things.

The Apostle proceeds. *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible*

* Exod. xi. 5.—† Chap. xxii. 29.

*and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence: For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself: By him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.**

That the Apostle does not intend to represent the Son of God as the Creator of the material system, but *only the medium through whom Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God*, was the opinion of the orthodox St. Chrysostom, an illustrious Father of the fourth century. It was also the opinion of Athanasius himself, and of others, no less famed for their orthodoxy and knowledge of the sacred writings. That this is the true idea of the passage, is evinced by the following considerations.

1. You will remark, it is not said that Christ of *himself* created all things, but *by him* were all things created; i. e. *by means of him, or through his instrumentality*. That we do not mistake the meaning of the word *by*, as used in this place, is evident from its use in verse 20; where it is said, it pleased the Father—*by him* (Christ) to reconcile all things unto himself. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that *by him* were all things created, as the *means or instrument* in the hand of God.

2. You will observe, that the same things, which are said, verse 16, to be *created* by Jesus Christ, are said, verse 20, to be *reconciled* by him. *By him were all things created: By him to reconcile all things unto himself.*

3. It is worthy of notice, that, not only all things in general, but *the all things that are in heaven and that are in earth*, which are said, verse 16, to be created by him, are said, verse 20, to be reconciled by him. *By him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

4. You will particularly notice the manner of expression. It is not said, that the heavens and the earth *themselves* were created by him, but only the things that are *in* heaven, and the things that are *in* earth, whether thrones, &c.

Having noticed these things, the following inferences naturally and necessarily arise, and serve for the explanation of the passage.

1. It is evident, that thrones, dominions, &c. things visible and invisible, in verse 16, are also to be included in verse 20 : For these are declared to be the all things, whether they be the things in earth or things in heaven. And although the Apostle does not, in verse 20, proceed to particularize what these things in heaven and earth are, which are said to be reconciled, yet, as he uses the same general phrase *all things*, and the same universal phrase *whether they be things in earth or things in heaven*, it is evident, that he intends verse 20 should be carried out as in verse 16, in illustration of what he means by all things in heaven and in earth ; to wit, *thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, things visible and invisible*.

2. We are hence compelled to infer, that the reconciliation is just as extensive as the creation,

If the all things, which are said to be created by Jesus Christ, mean material and intelligent existence, to wit, the heavens and the earth with all their inhabitants, then material and intelligent existence, to wit, the heavens and the earth with all their inhabitants, are reconciled by him : For the same things, which were created by him, it is said, *It pleased the Father to reconcile by Jesus Christ unto himself*.

3. But as no one will contend, that the *material* heavens and earth are capable of being *reconciled* unto God by Jesus Christ, it undeniably follows, that, in both passages, the heavens and the earth must intend something different from the material fabric of creation. It becomes us, therefore, to look into other parts of the sacred writings, and see whether the Holy Ghost do not use the words *heaven and earth*, in some other sense.

In the sixtyfifth chapter of Isaiah, the Gentiles are represented by the earth, and the Jews by the heavens. The chapter is introduced by a prediction of the calling of the Gentiles to be the people of God. All true servants of God among the Gentiles, it is said, shall be called by *another name*; that he who blesseth himself in the earth (among the Gentiles) shall bless himself in the God of truth (the true God); and he that sweareth in the earth (among the Gentiles) shall swear by the God of truth (the true God).* The meaning is, that the men of the earth, or the Gentiles, shall forsake idols, and acknowledge the true God only.† As an illustration of this, it is said, *Behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into my mind.*‡ This undoubtedly has reference to Gospel times, when the distinction of Jew and Gentile should cease, when both should be morally reformed, and a new order of things take place.

The prophet Haggai, speaking in the name of God concerning Christ, the true Zerubbabel, and concerning his success, says, *I will shake the heavens and the earth: And (yea) I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms (the Jews) and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen, &c.*§ The meaning of which is, that, by him should the Jews and the Gentiles be brought into subjection to the gospel.

The same prophet says, *I will shake the heaven and the earth—and the desire of all nations shall come.*|| This also refers to the Jews and Gentiles. Thus the Apostle, in his epistle to the Hebrews, explains it.¶

From these examples we learn, that the phrase “*heavens and earth*,” is frequently used to designate the *Jews and Gentiles*. The former are styled *heaven*, on account of their exaltation to heaven in point of spiritual privileges. The latter, because extremely degraded, through gross ignorance, and wholly destitute of the privileges of God’s spiritual kingdom, are styled *the earth*.

* Verse 15, 16. † *The God of truth* is but a hebraism for *the true God*. ‡ Verse 17. § Chap. ii. 21, 22. || Chap. ii. 6—7. ¶ Chap. xii. 26.

This sense of the heavens and the earth, and this only, consists with their being *reconciled to God by Jesus Christ*.

5. Hence the thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, things visible and invisible, *in* the heavens and *in* the earth, must necessarily designate the high and the low, the great and the small, the illustrious and obscure, the conspicuous and the unnoticed vulgar, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles.

6. As creation is often used, by the sacred writers, for a moral or spiritual reformation, it must have this meaning here. The Apostle intends to assert, that all ranks and descriptions, both of Jews and of Gentiles, are *reformed* by Jesus Christ. Examples of this use of the word *create*, in connexion with heavens and earth, have already been exhibited from the prophets.

Nor is it an uncommon signification of the word in the New Testament. *For we are his workmanship, created by Christ Jesus, unto good works.* And that ye put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, (i. e. as the Apostle, in the preceding context, explains it, the union of Jews and Gentiles in the same spiritual body or household) which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things† (who created all, both Jews and Gentiles) by Jesus Christ.‡*

Hence by the creation of all things, which are in heaven and in earth, as expressed in the passage in question, we are to understand a *moral reformation* of all orders and ranks both of Jews and Gentiles. This is plainly the idea of the passage; for verse 20 seems, evidently, to be an explanation for verse 16.

7. That the apostle does not mean a natural, but a moral creation only, is evinced by the consideration, that he uses very different phraseology from what the inspired writers uniformly use, when they speak of a natural cre-

* Eph. ii. 10.—† iv. 24.—‡ *κτίσις* is very often used for *moral beings*.—

§ On this last passage Calvin thus remarks. "The creation, here spoken of, is rather to be interpreted to mean a spiritual renovation than the first creation. The context requires, that we understand it of that renovation, which consists in a blessed redemption."

ation. Their style is this. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is." "Happy is he, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is." "Thus saith the Lord, that created the heavens, God himself, that formed the earth and made it." "God, that made the worlds and all things therein." This last is Paul's manner of expressing the creation of the material system.— "Worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." "Who created heaven and all things that therein are, and the sea and all things which are therein." This is the uniform phraseology of the inspired writers, when they would speak of the natural creation. Not an instance can be produced from the Scriptures, where the creation of material and intelligent being is expressed in phraseology, similar to that in the passage before us ; to wit, by him were all things created that are *in* heaven and that are *in* earth, &c. Unquestionably, therefore, the Apostle intends a moral creation.

Finally, He affords us a Key, by which this passage may be unlocked, and the Jew and Gentile, though partially concealed, may be fully opened upon our view.

"*And having made Peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things* unto himself.*" If we compare this with a passage in his epistle to the Ephesians, we shall be at no loss who these "*all things*" are. "*For he (Christ) is OUR PEACE, who hath made both (the circumcision and uncircumcision, Jew and Gentile) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, (that which caused opposition) even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so MAKING PEACE (between Jews and Gentiles) ; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by his cross, having slain the enmity thereby, and came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) which were a-*

* ~~warra~~ all persons or descriptions, Jews and Gentiles.

*far off, and to them (Jews) that were nigh : For through him we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access by one spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye (Gentiles) are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the Saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST himself being the CHIEF CORNER STONE, upon whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple to the Lord.”**

In view of what has been mentioned, it cannot, we conceive, be so much as questioned whether the Apostle, in the passage to the Colossians, be making the same representation, that he here makes to the Ephesians. The “*all things created and reconciled*” plainly intend all orders and ranks of Jews and Gentiles, between whom *he has made peace* by the blood of his cross.

The passage, properly expressed, stands thus. “*Seeing through him were all renovated, which are among the Jews and which are among the Gentiles, illustrious and obscure, whether thrones, or lordships, or authorities, or powers, all were renovated through him and under him. Therefore he is above them all, seeing in him they all consist. Yea, he is himself the head of the body, the church ; the prince, the first begotten from the dead, that he might be preeminent in all respects. For it pleased God, that in him the whole moral system should have its residence ; yea, through him, to reconcile the whole unto himself, he having made peace between them by the blood of his cross ; even through him to reconcile the whole, both of those who are Gentiles, and of those who are Jews.*” As an example of the things in earth, which Christ had created or reformed, he immediately adds, addressing himself to the converted Colossians, “*And you, that were formerly alienated and enemies in your minds, yet now hath he reconciled.*” No proof have we therefore, from these two famous passages, that Christ is the Creator of the material system. And surely our opponents will not pretend, that there are any others on which they place so much dependence, for the support of their doctrine, as on these.

* Eph. ii. 13—21.

SECTION II.

ANOTHER consideration, urged in proof of the supreme and independent divinity of Christ, is, that the scriptures declare him OMNIPOTENT.

In support of this, Heb. 1. 3. 10. 11. is adduced. As the whole chapter is intimately connected with the argument concerning Christ's person, we shall consider it at large, and see what proof may be drawn from it of his supreme and independent divinity.

Here the reader ought to have his bible open, first to read the chapter, and then attentively compare its various clauses with the following remarks.

The omnipotence of Christ is inferred from this declaration in the third verse, *and upholding all things by the word of his power.*

The possessive pronoun, *his* does not refer to the Son, but to that God, who spake by the Son.

This will be evident from the least attention to the whole passage. *Who being the brightness of his (God's) glory, and the express image of his (God's) person, and upholding all things by the word of his (God's) power.* No reason can be assigned why the last *his* should be referred to Jesus Christ.

The Apostle introduces the chapter, by considering the Son to be the messenger of God, by whom, in these last days, he has made known his will to mankind. He speaks of his *delegated* power. In the second verse it is said of the Son, *Whom he (God) hath appointed heir of all things; by whom also he (God) made the worlds.* Whatever be understood by the phrase *he made the worlds*, it is evident that the Son is the instrument only, by whom God accomplished this work. But, as the most natural and frequent signification of *aiwnas* the word, rendered *worlds*, is *ages*, or *periods*, or *dispensations*, and as this word is never, excepting perhaps one instance, applied to denote the fabric of creation, the correct translation of the passage must

be this ; *Through whom* (or if *δι α*, according to Grotius, be put for *δι ω*. For whom) *he constituted the ages* ; * i. e. the Patriarchal, Mosaic and Christian dispensations. These Christ upheld or supported by the power God, delegated to him for this purpose. Or by the all things, which he upholds, may be intended all things that pertain to the church, of which he is the appointed heir and head.

Another proof of Christ's supremé divinity is deduced from verse 6. *When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him.* But against this, as proof of his independent divinity, there are important objections.

It is worthy of remark, that the personage, whom the Angels are commanded by God to worship, is *the first begotten* ; which, we have seen, implies that he is neither selfexistent nor independent. Indeed verse 4 informs us, that the Son is *made* so much better than the angels as he hath, by inheritance, *obtained* a more excellent or honorable name than they. To this inheritance, it appears from verse 2, he was *appointed*. So that his superiority to the angels, he being the appointed heir of all things to the church, is a *delegated* superiority. The worship commanded must, therefore, be a worship in consequence of the delegated honor and preeminence, to which God had raised him ; a worship, which comports with the station of its object, and by no means supreme worship. "The Angels" is a scripture designation for the ministers of the churches. Those, of the seven churches of Asia and others, are styled Angels. The word, both in Greek and English, signifies those who are sent on an errand ; and is applicable to all messengers of God, whether celestial spirits, or prophets, or apostles, or ordinary ministers.

The word, *worship*, is generally used in scripture to denote that respect or homage, which it is customary to pay to men, who hold important and eminent stations. This will be fully evinced in its proper place. We therefore consider the command to be, *Let all the messen-*

* Dr. Doddridge translates it, "by whom also he constituted the ages."

gers of the kingdom, however eminent, whether angels, or prophets, or apostles, or ministers, acknowledge him their superior Lord and appointed Head.

The next passage, urged in proof of the supreme and independent divinity of Christ, is verse 8. *But unto* (of, or concerning) *The Son he saith, Thy throne O God is forever and ever.* Christ, it is said, is here declared to be God. Were this really the case, it would by no means establish the doctrine of his supreme and independent divinity. Our Lord informs us, that the scripture calls those Gods, who are divinely commissioned. Did our opponents but take the whole passage together, they would at once see, that, when the inspired writer calls Christ *God*, he is careful to prevent all mistake, by pointing out his *inferiority* to the supreme God. “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows :” i. e. thy fellow Gods. Let Christ be as high in title and power as he may, it is here declared, that there is one *above* him, who is *his* God, and who has given him exaltation over *his* fellows. The word, God, is applied, in an inferior sense, to Moses, to the Jewish Rulers, and a multitude of others, because they were divinely commissioned. Further; it is by no means certain, that the Son is here thus styled. The Greek word *θεος*, being in the nominative, this passage might, with equal if not greater propriety, be translated *God is thy throne forever*; that is, the support and foundation, the strength and stability of thy kingdom. This is said *of* or *concerning* the Son; for the same word is translated thus in verse 7 : *Of the Angels he saith, &c.*

Finally, the 45th psalm, from whence this quotation is made, is a song in praise of king Solomon; and the passage in question is applied to Christ, in view of his being the son of David, the true Solomon; concerning whom God promised an everlasting throne.

“And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and

they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Without reason is this passage urged in proof of Christ's supreme and independent divinity. Its immediate application is to that God, who, in the preceding verse, is declared to be the God of Jesus Christ. The *And*, with which the verse begins, denotes only that the apostle is about to introduce another quotation. This is made from the 102 Psalm ; where it is manifest, that these words are spoken by Christ, of Jehovah his God, as an acknowledgment that he has no reason to doubt but he will support him, give him victory over his enemies, and permanently establish his kingdom. The learned Pool says, " This psalm is acknowledged by the majority of expositors to be a prediction concerning the Messiah." If this be conceded, the preceding observations are undoubtedly just. In verses 23, 24. Christ says, " He weakened my strength in the way ; he shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days." Immediately upon this, the immutability and power of God, who had promised him the kingdom, rush upon his mind, dispel all dark appearances, and inspire him with the most confident hope. He therefore addresses his God in language, which denotes his full assurance, that the kingdom will undoubtedly be bestowed, notwithstanding present appearances are unfavorable to this great event. " Thy years are throughout all generations : Of old, hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are all the works of thine hands : They shall perish, but thou shalt endure ; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Hence he concludes, " The children of thy servants (Abraham Isaac and Jacob) shall continue, and their SEED shall be established before thee." What the Apostle remarks to the Galatians is peculiarly applicable here. " He saith not seeds, as of many, but seed, as of one, which is Christ."

The ideas, suggested above, are still more beautifully and strikingly expressed in the Septuagint ; which the learned reader may consult at his leisure.

Thus this introduction of the epistle to the Hebrews, on which our opponents so much rest their cause, and which they consider as amply sufficient, of itself, to uphold their doctrine, proves an Egyptian reed and a sandy foundation. But to us it becomes a staff of aid, and a rock of firm support. That we may not, however, wear the appearance of vain boasting, let us give the chapter a brief review. In doing this we notice

1. Jesus Christ is represented a being, as distinct from God, as are the Fathers and the prophets. " God, who in time past spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath, in these last days, spoken to us by his Son."

2. It is said, " Whom he (God) hath appointed to be heir of all things." This word, *appointed*, plainly suggests his dependence upon God for the honors and dignities he possesses.

3. The highest representation given of him is, " the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person," or a ray of his brightness and an image of his perfections ; not that he is God himself, or really that divine person of whom he is the image. Christian converts are said to be the glory of the Apostles ; and the Apostles are said to be the glory of Christ. But who will suppose, that Christian converts are the Apostles, or that the Apostles are Christ !

4. Whatever be Christ's superiority to the Angels, it is declared to be a constituted superiority, delegated to him, or *obtained* as an inheritance, in consequence of the services he has performed. Verse 4.

5. God is expressly declared to be his throne or support ; which plainly evinces, that the stability of his kingdom arises, not from any inherent powers of his own, but wholly from the aid and assistance of another. Verse 8.

6. God is, in an unqualified manner, declared to be *his God*, and, for his regard to righteousness, to have exalted him above his fellows. Verse 9. Jesus Christ, therefore,

cannot be the supreme God, seeing he has a God above him. It is also evident, that he is not one of the persons in the supposed Trinity. If he were, those persons would be his fellows; and he would be exalted above them; which would be absurd, inasmuch as it would give him superiority to the Father himself. Most evident is it, that his fellow Gods are Angels, Prophets, and Apostles, above whom he is exalted.

Thus, instead of aiding our opponents, this chapter is substantial and invincible evidence of the truth of our doctrine.

Another passage, alledged to prove the omnipotency and independent power of Christ, is, *Who* (the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ) *shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.**

The proper method of coming at the true doctrine is to compare spiritual things with spiritual, or scripture with itself. Now the word of God not only ascribes high and extensive powers to Jesus Christ, but is careful to inform us how he came by these powers. Hence Christ himself declares, after his resurrection, *All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me.†* If given unto him, surely it could not have been eternally inherent in him. The account, furnished by his harbinger, is, that *God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him;‡* i. e. he giveth it without measure. But, if he have *received from God* wonderful and divine powers to a surpassing degree, it is most evident he did not always possess these powers. Moreover. *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory—hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church.§* It is very plain to be seen, therefore, that the mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, is not an underrived, but a *delegated* power. The Apostle, in the passage in question, is speaking of his mighty power to change our vile body, and render it like unto his own glorified body.

* Phil. iii. 21.—† Mat. xxviii. 18.—‡ John iii. 34.—§ Eph. i. 17—22.

In perfect accordance with the passages adduced, our Saviour informs us how he comes by the power of raising the dead, and of the reason why it is conferred upon him. "Verily verily I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For, as the Father hath life in himself (the source of life, the power of the resurrection) so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and he hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."* Here our Lord asserts, that the power of raising the dead and of executing judgment is *given him, by the father*, in consideration of his being the Son of man. And he proceeds to tell them not to marvel at this, for he does not accomplish these mighty works by himself. "I can of mine own self do nothing. As I hear I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."†

That he is only a delegated agent, both in the affair of the resurrection and of the judgment, is also unequivocally asserted by the Apostles "Knowing that he, that raised up the Lord Jesus Christ, shall raise us up also by Jesus."‡ "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."§ "In the day when God shall judge the world by that man, whom he hath ordained."|| Though God be ultimately judge himself and the author of the resurrection, yet he performs these mighty works, through the instrumentality of Christ.¶ Thus the apostles say they were commanded to preach.

It becomes our opponents to prove, when they adduce passages descriptive of Christ's high and godlike powers, that they are *underived* powers. We contend, that it is the uniform voice of Prophets, of Apostles, and of Christ himself, that the powers he possesses are conferred or bestowed upon him by his God. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul prays, that they may know what is the exceeding greatness of the power of the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, towards those who believe, which, he says, is "according to the working

* John v. 25—27.—† verse 30.—‡ 2 Cor. iv. 14.—§ Rom. ii. 16.—|| Acts xvii. 31.—¶ Chap. x. 42.

of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church.”* Surely, after such an explanation concerning the exalted powers of Christ, if there were not a word else of the kind in scripture, we might rest assured that they are not independent powers, but delegated, communicated to him, or bestowed upon him, by his God, the Father of glory.

To affirm, that the works, ascribed to Christ, could not be performed by a creature, is being wise above what is written. Christ certainly declares, that he does not perform his mighty works by any power of his own ; which declaration could not be a truth in the mouth of God. Whatever God does, he does of himself. He derives no power from another. He is himself the underived source and fountain of all power.

Christ, however, declares, “ I with the finger of God cast out demons.”† “ The Son can do nothing of himself. The Father (or God) who dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.”‡ “ I can of my own self do nothing.”§ It is therefore altogether unbecoming in erring man to say, that the powers ascribed to Christ are such as could not be delegated. *All things are possible with God.* He, who inspired the prophets and apostles with a knowledge of future events, a knowledge which he declares to be peculiar to himself, and who endowed them with the divine powers of raising the dead, &c. is undoubtedly able to furnish Christ with those powers of raising the dead and judging the world, with which the scriptures declare he has actually furnished him. Shall we depend on the surmises of uninspired men, or on the plain, unequivocal declarations of the scriptures ?

* Chap. i. 19—21. † Luke ii. 20. ‡ John xiv. 10. § John v. 30.

SECTION III.

IT is urged, in proof of the supreme and proper Deity of Christ, that the scriptures ascribe to him OMNISCIENCE.

The most noted passages, adduced to this point, are such as follow. "Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee."*

The occasion of this declaration of the disciples, was, that Christ manifested himself acquainted with their desire to ask him some questions, respecting the meaning of what he had spoken, even without their having suggested any thing to him on the subject. Hence they expressed their assurance, that he knew all things.

And what is the just conclusion from his possession of this knowledge? What conclusion did *they* draw from it? Did they infer, as some now do, By this we know that thou art the omniscient God, the underived source and fountain of all knowledge? The Evangelist states their conclusion to be, "By this we believe that thou camest forth from God." Their impression of his vast and extensive knowledge, reaching even to the desire of their hearts, excited no conviction of his being the omniscient God himself, but only that he had come forth as *God's messenger*.

Now if we take it for granted, that they formed a just idea of his knowledge, why shall we not also take it for granted, that they formed a correct conclusion from his possession of that knowledge? Further—"And he (Peter) said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."† "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man."‡ "All the churches shall know that I am he, which searcheth the reins and hearts, and will give unto every one of you according to his works."§

* John. xvi. 30. † John. xxi. 17. ‡ Chap. ii. 24, 25. § Rev. ii. 23.

And yet it is said, concerning God, "Thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men."* These are the most noted passages to this point, and the argument is fairly stated before us.

What now is the conclusion? It is that drawn by the disciples, while under the peculiar impression of his vast and extensive knowledge. "By this we believe that Christ came forth from God." Our reason for believing this, and nothing more is as follows.

Knowledge of the hearts and secret purposes of men, though, in a proper sense, peculiar to the omniscient God, he only having this knowledge as an attribute of his nature, may be, and often has been, communicated to creatures. Numerous instances of this occur in scripture. Ahijah the prophet, although blind through age, was inspired to know the wife of Jeroboam, and the intentions of her heart, notwithstanding she feigned herself another.†

It is asserted, concerning Elijah the Prophet, that he could tell the things, which the King of Israel should do in his bed chamber; an expression denoting a knowledge of the most secret transactions.‡ Much in point is the declaration of Elisha. And the man of God said, "Let her alone, for her soul is vexed within her, and the Lord hath hidden it from me and hath not told me."§ This clearly implies, that the prophet supposed God could communicate to him the knowledge of the secret troubles of the soul of this woman; and that it was a matter of some surprize that he had not done it. We have a memorable instance, in the acts of the Apostles, in which Peter knew, by inspiration, that Ananias had kept back part of the price of the land, though he declared he had not; and, also, that he and his wife had secretly agreed to maintain the falsehood. Indeed well known is it, that, in the Apostolic age, there was a standing gift of this kind, the gift of discerning spirits.¶

It is worthy of remark however, that universal knowledge is by no means predicable of Christ, in consequence of the latitude of the expression in the passages mentioned. The word *all*, does not always denote strict univer-

* Kings viii. 39. † Kings xiv. 1. 6. ‡ 2 Kings vi. 9. 18. § Chap. iv. 27.
¶ 1. Cor. xii. 10.

sality. The very same phrase, of knowing all things, is used in application to other men. "Ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things."* "The appointing, which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you all things."† "My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an Angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth."‡

Whatever be meant by such unqualified expressions, the high and extraordinary knowledge of what passes in the hearts of men is what may be communicated to creatures, to those who are merely men. These examples, above cited, sufficiently demonstrate. In order to prove that Jesus is the omniscient God, something further is necessary than evidence, that he has such knowledge; must also be shewn, that it is an attribute of his nature; that it is underived. Is it demanded of us to exhibit evidence, that Christ actually possessed it by delegation? The declaration of John and of himself affords this evidence. "God giveth not the spirit (the spirit of knowledge as well as power) by measure unto him."§ "The Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that himself doeth."|| There was one thing however, which God did not see fit to reveal unto him. "Of that day knoweth no man, no, not the Angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only."¶

But does not the Lord Jesus say, "All the churches shall know that I am he, which searcheth the reins and hearts?" meaning that he is that supreme God, who has declared concerning himself, "I the Lord (Jehovah) search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings,**

The original teaches no such doctrine. It does not say *ἐγώ εἰμι ἄττος ὁ σκευόμενος*, "I am HE who searcheth." The inspired writer is not so definite in his expressions, as to make our Lord affirm himself to be the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

To teach, however, a doctrine of such importance concerning one, who has lived and died on the earth, it is but

* I. John ii. 20. † verse 27. ‡ II Sam. xiv. 20. § John iii. 34. || John v. 20. ¶ Mark xiii. 32. ** Jer. xvii. 10.

natural to conclude, he would use the most pointed and unambiguous terms, which language can furnish. But, since this is not the case, we shall take the liberty to translate the passage according to the design of the speaker, which, as appears from the context, was only to state, that the churches should become sensible that he knew the true characters of men, and would reward them according to their works. The just and correct translation is, *All the churches shall know, (or be made sensible) that I am a searcher of the reins and hearts : Or, all the churches shall be sensible, that I am one, who searches the reins and hearts.*

And what matter of surprise, that the Son of God should be able to search the hearts and reward men according to their works, seeing the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son ? Is it wisdom to believe, that God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, and will not, cannot furnish him with that knowledge of these secrets, which shall qualify him to judge righteous judgment ? Surely God would not exalt Christ to be Head over all things to the church, and yet fail to bestow upon him such qualifications, as become the exalted station.

But we need not reason on the subject, since Christ himself declares, four verses below, that he has received this knowledge and power of his Father.* It is plain, that these passages, on which our opponents make the greatest dependence, do by no means prove Christ to be the omniscient God.

* Rev. ii. 29.

SECTION IV.

ANOTHER consideration, urged in proof of the supreme divinity of Christ, is, that the scriptures attribute to him OMNIPRESENCE.

*No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.**

We cannot better express our ideas of the real meaning of this passage, than they are expressed in the language of an English divine, as quoted by Christie.

"This text is by many supposed to be quite conclusive, not only for the preexistence of Christ, in that he is said to have come down from heaven; but as a proof of his Deity, because an omnipresence peculiar only to God seems to be ascribed to him, viz. That whilst he was upon earth, he was at the same time also in heaven. And yet where persons have accustomed themselves to attend to the peculiar, elevated language of holy scripture, how different do the same phrases appear? An eminent person at the dawn of the reformation, no enemy to what is called *the divinity* of Christ, did nevertheless so clearly perceive that our Lord, by these lofty expressions intended only to teach a very plain truth concerning himself, that he without scruple gave this interpretation of it to the public. *No one understands the things of God but I only.*†

"There are three things here asserted by our Lord.

1. That no one had ascended up to heaven but himself.
2. That he the Son of man had come down from heaven.
3. That himself was then in heaven, even while he was speaking to Nicodemus.*

"A true and consistent account of these positions will give us our Lord's meaning in them.

"1. This whole discourse with Nicodemus is in the prophetic style, highly figurative. In the strict literal sense, it was by no means true, that no one had ascended up to heaven but the Son of man; for Enoch, the seventh from Adam, in all probability; and Elijah the prophet,

* John iii. 13. † Robert Stephens.

had *certainly* been translated from earth to heaven. Neither was it true in the direct sense of the words, that *the Son of man* as here asserted, *had ascended up to heaven*. We have no account in the scriptures from whence alone we can know aught concerning him, that he ever ascended to heaven but once, when he took his final leave of this earth and of his disciples. Some other sense of the words then is to be sought, in which it might be said that the Son of man had ascended up to heaven. Now as in our way of apprehension, a man, that would be acquainted with the secrets of the divine will, should go to heaven to converse with God; it hence comes that the phrase *ascending to heaven*, easily signifies the being admitted to the knowledge of God's counsels. So Moses tells the Jews, that God had so clearly revealed his will to them from heaven by him, that there was no need for them to go up thither to be acquainted with it. Deut. xxx. 12. *It is not in heaven that thou shouldst say; who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?* And Prov. xxx. 4. *Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?* i. e. who hath been made acquainted with the mind of God, with heavenly truth?

"2. If *ascending up to heaven* is not to be taken literally, neither is *descending from heaven* to be understood of a local descent. For the Son of man, as it is here also asserted, *could not come down from heaven*, where he had confessedly never been. What then is the usual scriptural meaning of the phrase *coming down from heaven*? Now Mat. xxi. 25. Our Lord himself explains it, in his question to the Jews, *the baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?* i. e. of divine or human institution or authority. John's baptism, therefore, was from heaven, because it was of divine appointment; and John the baptist himself came from heaven because he had a divine authority or commission. So James i. 17. *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.*—iii. 15, 17. *This wisdom descendeth not from above, but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, &c.* John iii. 31. *He that com-*

eth from above is above all ; he that is of the earth, is earthly and speaketh of the earth ; he that cometh from heaven is above all. John the baptist in this last citation speaks modestly and disparagingly of his own authority and commission from God, compared with that of Christ, which was indeed far more illustrious and divine. John vi. 33. *The bread of God is he, which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.* Verse 51. *I am the living bread, which came down from heaven.* Our Lord had before (verse 27) compared his doctrine to meat which would nourish men in virtue, and bestow an immortal life upon them. He here calls *himself* that meat, the bread that came down from heaven, because he had a divine authority to teach men the gospel virtue, holiness, and eternal life.

“ 3. (*The son of man who is in heaven.* The Son of man who had never been in heaven, could not (properly speaking) be there. Dr. Clark, and others very judiciously refer to John i. 18. as a parallel passage ; and understand *being in heaven* to be the same as *being in the bosom of the Father*, i. e. highly favored by God ; made acquainted with his benevolent counsels and designs. Grotius remarks here, that if the conversation of true christians (Phil. iii. 20) is said, whilst on earth, *to be in heaven* with God ; much more may this be said of Christ, who had continual extraordinary communications of wisdom and power from God. These words of Christ therefore, do not relate to any prior state of existence before he was born of Mary, or to any supposed divine nature annexed to his human nature ; but what he declares to Nicodemus, stript of that metaphorical dress in which he thought proper to clothe it, is, that himself alone was admitted to the knowledge of the whole will of God, and authorized to reveal it to men.”

This interpretation is sanctioned by the context. It does not appear to be the design of our Lord to state any thing concerning his own origin. He had taught Nicodemus, in figurative language, the doctrine of regeneration ; a doctrine, which, to this master in Israel, seemed very strange. Our Lord affirms however, that he had taught him no other than a solemn truth. In proof of

this, he refers to his divine inspiration (which Nicodemus had acknowledged) under the representation of his having been in heaven to learn these things, and of his being there still to behold them.

*"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of you."** *"And lo, I am with you always to the end of the world."*†

The plain and obvious meaning of these passages is, that, as the Apostles were commissioned by Christ the great Head of the church, he promises to aid, assist, and bless them, at all times, with his support and protection. The Angels are ministering servants under Christ, sent forth to minister to them, who are the heirs of salvation. By these he communicates with earth. Hence we read, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it, by his Angel, unto his servant John." It is nowhere said, that he is present with his people *by personal residence*. On the contrary, he is represented as having gone into the heavens, there to reside until the times of restitution of all things,‡ where he sat down at the right hand of majesty on high,§ ever living to make intercessions for us. There was the place of his residence when the Jews stoned Stephen.

The scriptures therefore, instead of ascribing omnipresence to Christ, plainly deny his possession of this attribute. The passages in question are very clearly explained by the following. "If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come unto you;" i. e. by means of the comforter, the spirit of which I have spoken to you. "At that day shall ye know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."|| You shall know that I am the object of the Father's regard, and that ye are the objects of my regard. You shall know, that I am really empowered by the Father, and that I am able to empower you to build up and extend his spiritual kingdom in the world.

* Mat. xviii. 20. † 28. 20. ‡ Acts iii. 21. § Heb. i. 3. || Joha xiv. 14. 20.

SECTION V.

IT is urged, to prove the supreme Deity of Christ, that the scriptures declare him ETERNAL.

It ought first to be observed, that none of those passages, which are supposed to assert Christ's *preexistence* only, are at all in point: For the doctrine of his eternity may be false; although the doctrine of his *preexistence* were conceded to be true. It does not follow, that he is the supreme eternal God, because he existed before his birth of Mary. Those passages therefore, commonly adduced by Trinitarians for the support of their doctrine of Christ's eternity; which however state at most a previous existence only; will not be noticed by us.

Before Abraham was I am,* is a text in the mouth of all our opponents, as affording decided proof of the eternal existence of Christ. The phrase, "*I am*" is said to be that by which God declares his eternity; and being assumed by Christ as descriptive of himself, denotes that he is the eternal God.

It does not appear, however, that God ever used this phrase to indicate his eternity, rather than any other attribute of his nature. When he declares to Moses I AM THAT I AM, and commands him to *say unto them, I AM hath sent me*; he may intend to intimate, either that there is no name expressive of what he is, or that he is a God of real existence, not an imaginary being like the Gods of the Egyptians. But does Christ really assume what is pretended? Does he say *I am that I am*, or any thing like this, *say unto them I am hath sent me*? There is nothing in the structure of the sentence, which has the most distant allusion to it. Had it been his intention to assume this style of Jehovah, he would undoubtedly have said, *Before Abraham was I AM THAT I AM*. Such a mode of expression would have had some appearance of laying claim to the Godhead, and therefore of asserting, in view of the question put by the Jews, absolute eternity. But when he replies to their question, whether he had seen Abraham not being yet fifty years

* John viii. 58.

of age? *Before Abraham was I am*; the most, which can with any plausibility be affirmed, is, that he had a present or real existence before Abraham was born. The true meaning of this phrase will be plain, if we consider its obvious signification in other places.

When the high priest asked him, *Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed*? Jesus said *I am*.^{*} Upon this the high Priest rent his clothes and declared him to be guilty of blasphemy. *Many shall come in my name, saying I AM—go ye not after them.*[†] Our translators have added the word *Christ*. They, it seems, did not consider the expression, *I am*, to mean eternity, but only a claim of being the Christ or anointed of God. “The woman of Samaria saith unto him I know that Messias cometh which is called Christ; when he is come he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her I that speak unto thee, AM.”[‡] Our translators have, added *he*. They might, with equal propriety have added *that Messias which is called Christ*. We have two instances of the same manner of speaking in this very chapter. *If ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins*. Our translators have very properly added *he*; suggesting that our Lord affirms himself to be the Messiah. Now who would conclude from the expression, *If ye believe not that I AM*, Christ meant to lay claim to the title, which God, to affirm his divinity, assumed before Moses? Or that he meant to give the Jews to understand, that they would die in their sins, unless they should believe him to be Supreme Jehovah? Could this text be thus distorted, it would be the best in the compass of inspiration, to demonstrate, that our doctrine concerning Christ is absolutely damnable. Our opponents are welcome to press it into their service, if they can. Such is indeed the use, which some daring and zealous minds have ventured to make of it. But there is an important passage, four verses below, which exposes their zeal, and is also absolutely irreconcilable with their construction of that in question. “Then said Jesus unto them, when ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM.” Does he mean, that then they should know

^{*} Mark xiv. 62. [†] Mark xiii. 6. [‡] John vi. 20.

him to be the supreme and independent Jehovah ? Had he rested here, this would doubtless have been inferred, and declared selfevident. But he proceeds, " Then shall ye know that *I am*, and that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me I speak these things." Pray was the I AM THAT I AM unable to do any thing of himself ! Or did he speak what he said to Moses, only as he was taught by his Father !

With much better grace would our opponents contend, that Paul assumes to himself this peculiar style of the God of Moses : For he uses, in application to himself, precisely the same phrase, *I am that I am*, *ego o ego*.

We suppose, however, they would hardly contend, when they consider the context, that Paul really means to assert his independent divinity, seeing he says " I am the least of the Apostles—but I labored more abundantly than they all ; yet not I, but the grace of God, which is with me."

Why then do they not cease contending for the independent divinity of Christ, from his use of a *part only* of the above phrase ? Since he says, in the same discourse with the Jews, " When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM, and that I do nothing of myself, but, as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

Before Abraham was I am. In our opinion the true idea is this. Before Abraham was I am the Christ, or Messiah ; i. e. I am that personage, brought into view to Adam and Eve, when God promised them for their consolation, and foretold, as an object of their faith and confidence, *The SEED of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* But the Jews, unlike their father Abraham, hated Christ, and were always ready to put a false construction upon his language. Hence he says to them, *Why do ye not understand my speech ?* The reason is, *Because ye cannot hear my word.* It appears from the context, that they were exceedingly malicious on this occasion ; and, though reproved by our Lord, obstinately persevered in perverting his expressions. As another reproof he observed, that they had a very different temper and spirit from their father Abraham. *Your father*

Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.

To see *the day* of a person is to see the time or period in which a person lives to act, to accomplish his work, and to illustrate his character. Abraham, therefore, could not have seen *the day* of Christ, otherwise than by faith; for Abraham died hundreds of years before the day of Christ commenced. He saw it however in prophecy, through the promise of God to him, *In thy SEED shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* This was his joy and gladness. He believed God. He had that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things invisible. In this manner was the day of Christ present to the Patriarch. In this way he saw it and was glad. Had the Jews not been obstinately malicious, they would never have observed, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* What a perversion of language is here! Our Lord had not given the least intimation, that *he* rejoiced to see *Abraham's day*. How plain is it, that the Jews were bent on perverting his words! Jesus, however, condescends to correct them: That they might be without excuse, he explains himself by saying in effect, that, when he said Abraham rejoiced to see his day, he did not intend to represent himself contemporary with Abraham, but to be that Christ or Messiah, with whom the venerable father was made acquainted by promise, and whom he saw by faith: Which intimation of Messiah was not confined to Abraham; for he had been prophesied of and promised long before his day, even to the first parents of the human race. Before Abraham was I am the Christ; that personage, whose day Abraham rejoiced to see, and the sight of which made him glad.

Another passage urged to prove the eternity of Christ, is, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be a ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting."* It is well known, that the Hebrew and Greek words, sometimes rendered *eternal*, *everlasting*, &c. have various significa-

* Micah v. 2.

tions, and are often applied to things, which have both beginning and end. Hence Cruden, in his concordance, says, "The words *eternal*, *everlasting*, *forever*, are sometimes taken for a long time, and are not always to be understood strictly." This observation he illustrates by a number of examples. Indeed these terms very frequently signify an *age*, a *period*, a *dispensation*, or any long duration not specifically determined. When they are applied to any thing known to have had no beginning of existence, they are then to be considered as denoting strict and real eternity. When otherwise applied, they are to have a different construction.

In order, therefore, to settle the meaning of the word, *everlasting*, in this passage, the duration of the existence of Christ must be *previously* ascertained. Until it be done, the duration, which this word here intends, will remain a matter of doubt. A thousand such passages would do nothing towards deciding the question in hand.

Had we not already seen enough, concerning Christ, to fix the proper interpretation of this word, still the context forbids the mind to rest in suspense. It is said of him, verse 4th, "He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord HIS GOD." Unless we are willing to suppose two eternal beings, one of whom is the Lord God of the other, we are necessarily driven to the conclusion, that Christ cannot be the eternal God.

It is said by the learned, that one meaning of "goings forth" is descent, family, &c. Grotius applies this passage, in its primary sense, to Zorobabel; and says "his descent is ancient, from distant times: *i. e.* he derives his birth from a house of illustrious antiquity, who had been the reigning family for five hundred years." The Chaldee paraphrase renders this place, "Whose name has been told, or mentioned, from eternity, from the days of the age." The meaning is, whose name has been *decreed from the beginning*. Calvin, it is said, interprets it in a manner somewhat similar: "Whose goings forth have been decreed from the days of eternity."*

* Vid. Christie in loco.

SECTION VI.

IT is affirmed, that the scriptures ascribe **IMMUTABILITY** to Christ, and that, therefore, he must be the supreme and independent God.

*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever.** This is considered a plain declaration, that he is immutable; and consequently **GOD**, whose distinguishing character is, that *he changes not*.

But, were it conceded, that Jesus Christ, who has at all times the spirit without measure, changes not in his purposes, plans, or doctrines, how would this prove him to be the supreme and independent God? Can it be supposed, that this passage proves him to be immutable in every respect? If there be any truth in the scriptures, or in his own declarations, he has changed his condition often. The history of his life is a history of as great mutability in his circumstances, as is true of any descendent of Adam. He certainly has passed through the changes of death, and of a resurrection to immortal life. From a very low state he is now exalted to the right hand of God on high; and he will eventually deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, and be subject to him, that did put all things under him.

The passage adduced, does not establish his immutability in any respect, save in point of doctrine. It is of this only, that the Apostle here speaks. "Remember them, which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same," &c. *That Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*, is urged as a reason, why they should carefully imitate or adhere to the faith of those, who had spoken unto them the word of God. The whole force of the argument arises from the immutability of his *doctrine*, or system faith published by his ministers. Jesus Christ is therefore evidently put for the doctrine of Christ. Of this there are very numerous examples in Paul's writ-

* Heb. xiii. 8.

ings. One or two shall be adduced. "For me to live is Christ;"* *i. e.* it is for the advantage of his doctrine; seeing, by this means, it will be more abundantly published in the world. "Ye have not so learned Christ;"† *i. e.* ye have not so learned the christian doctrine.

The passage, reduced to plain English, will read thus; "Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." For the *doctrine* of Christ is one. It never varies. "Be not therefore carried about with divers strange doctrines; for it is a good thing, that the heart be established with grace." The *person* of Christ is not spoken of. This both the preceeding and subsequent context, which relates to the christian faith, clearly evinces. And surely it will not be pretended, because the system of faith, which Christ has inspired his ministers to publish to the world, does not vary, therefore he must be the immutable God! Especially, since Christ himself declares, "*My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.*"‡

* Phil. i. 21. † Eph. iv. 20. ‡ Joha vii. 16.

SECTION VII.

ANOTHER argument, much insisted on by the advocates for the supreme Deity of Christ, is, that he forgave sins. All sins it is said, are against God, the only Being to whom men are accountable; and it must be an arrogant assumption of divine prerogative, for any creature to presume to remit offences against the Most High.

The account of Christ's forgiving sins is thus stated by Matthew. "And behold they brought unto him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemeth. And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is it easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walk. But, that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith he to the sick of the palsy, arise and take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they glorified God, which had given such power unto men."* According to Mark, the scribes said, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God only?"†

Whatever be understood by Christ's forgiving the sins of the sick of the palsy, it is certain, that his power or authority to do this, was not inherent, but delegated power. There are two words in the Greek, *ἐξουσία* and *δύναμις*, by which these different ideas are generally marked. The latter signifies inherent ability, or authority arising from capacity of nature. The former conveys the idea of licence, legality, or a moral right to exercise authority, and is derived from *ἐξέσθαι*, *it is lawful, it is permitted*. That these words suggest such distinction the scribes were sensible, and our Saviour evidently admitted. Hence, when he assumed the authority of forgiving sins by say-

* Mat. ix. 2—8. † Mark ii. 7.

ing, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*, the scribes choose to put a false and invidious construction upon his words, and to understand him as assuming divine authority. Murmuring among themselves, and pretending it an encroachment upon the divine prerogative, they say, *Who can forgive sins but God only?* The word they use, rendered *can* is *δυναται*, derived from *δυναμις*, a word expressive of that essential authority, which arises from ability of nature. But our Lord, to expose their maliciousness, and to evince, that he claimed not the authority which they pretended, uses the word, expressive of licence or permission. He does not say, *That ye may know that the Son of man on earth δυναται has natural ability to forgive sins ; but ἐξουθεσιαν has licence or permission so to do.* Accordingly he gave proof of it, by immediately performing a miraculous cure. This explanation, accompanied with the extraordinary miracle, closed their mouths. *And when the multitude saw (both the explanation and the miracle) they marvelled and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.* Though they were well disposed to glorify God, in view of what they had seen and heard, yet they had no idea, that it would become them to ascribe divine glory to Christ ; to whom, they rightly concluded, God had *delegated* these wonderful powers. Neither does it become us to differ, in our conduct, from them : Especially since inspiration informs, “ Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins.”

But what is the real meaning of Christ's forgiving sins in this passage ? Some of the most respectable commentators are of opinion, that it means only his delivering the paralytic from his disorder, the consequence of his sins. Calvin expresses himself thus on the subject. “ Unquestionably a strong disposition to scandalize him (*obtrudendi libido*) impelled these scribes to the base conclusion, that our Lord was a blasphemer for using such phraseology as he did. Had they really thought him worthy of reprehension, why did they not make inquiry into his conduct and meaning ? Moreover, since the language was ambiguous, and Christ said nothing which was

not customary with the prophets, while they testified the favor of God, why did the scribes convert, to an improper sense, what was capable of a more unexceptionable interpretation? In taking such a method to condemn Christ, it is evident therefore, that they were previously infected with spiteful malevolence against him.”*

Dr. Mc. Knight, in his note upon the passage, where the Apostle directs to pray for a brother, who has not committed a mortal sin, and affirms that God will grant him life,† makes the following observations. “John’s direction *Let him ask God and he will grant unto him life*, is equivalent to that of James, *Let them (the elders) pray over them, and the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and so, although he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him*; i. e. although he hath committed sins, which have occasioned him to be punished with a mortal disease, he shall be delivered from that punishment. In calling a miraculous recovery from a mortal disease, which had been inflicted as a punishment of sins, the forgiving of sins, James has followed his master, who called the recovery of the sick of the palsy the forgiving of his sins. Mat. ix. 2—5. In like manner the psalmist represents the healing of all his diseases, as the forgiveness of all his iniquities.”

In the comment of the learned Pool on this passage, we have these observations. “Because all transgressions of the law did not come to the knowledge of the judges; therefore God sanctioned the law with threatenings of premature death, and also of diseases, as appears from Deut. xxviii. 22—27. Sometimes, indeed, there are natural causes of diseases and bodily disorders, God having thus permitted; as we learn from John v. 14, where our Lord says to the man, who had an infirmity thirty and eight years, *Behold thou art made whole, sin no more lest a worse thing come unto thee*. This disease was unquestionably derived to him through his own fault. The same also is evident from I Cor. xi. 30, where Paul says, concerning the practice of eating and drinking at the Lord’s table unworthily, or so as to add drunkenness to thirst, *For*

* Vid. Harm. in loco. † Translation of Apostolical Epistles, i. John 5, 16.

this cause many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep. The passage, in question, is parallel with Isaiah xxxiii. 24, where the prophet predicts the prosperity of the people thus ; *And the inhabitants shall not say I am sick ; the people that dwell therein, shall be forgiven their iniquity : i. e. all their diseases shall be removed from them.*"

In addition to what these Commentators have stated, we would observe, that it is by no means uncommon for the sacred writers to represent removal of diseases and afflictions in the language of forgiving sins. The examples, already adduced, are proof of this. Since however this interpretation may seem rather strange to those who have not accurately considered the scriptural language on this subject, it may not be improper to adduce two or three examples more.

God says, by the prophet Isaiah, to his ancient people, *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins ; return unto me for I have redeemed thee.**

From the context it is evident, that God is endeavoring to persuade the Jews to return from trust in graven images ; and asserts in this passage, as a reason why they should do so, that their deliverances from tribulation and affliction, were from him, and not from graven images, or the gods of the heathen. So that the phrase of *blotting out their transgressions and sins* is equivalent to *delivering them from the temporal tribulations*, under which they had labored.

The same manner of representing the prosperity of the Jews, and their deliverance from their afflictions, is to be found in the prophecy of Jeremiah. " In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for and there shall be none ; and the sins of Judah and they shall not be found ; for I will pardon them whom I reserve."† The previous affliction of Israel is thus declared.—" Israel is a scattered sheep ; the lions have driven him away : First the king of Assyria hath devoured him ; and last this Nebuchadnezzar,

* Chap. xlv. 22. , † Chap. l. 20.

King of Babylon, hath broken his bones." The deliverance promised is, "I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead." This deliverance is described, in the verse following, as "putting away their iniquity and sins," and "bestowing pardon and forgiveness."

A very plain example of similar representation occurs in the New Testament. "Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you : As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the holy ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained."* But were the Apostles endowed with the power of forgiving the sins of men, or fixing their sins upon them in the literal sense of this phraseology. All that can be said, concerning them in this respect, is, that *they had the power of healing all manner of diseases, and inflicting judgments on such as opposed them in the performance of the duties of their mission.* Accordingly we find, that Paul caused the sins of Elymas, the sorcerer, to be retained, by fixing blindness upon him, for laboring to turn away the deputy from the faith. This was the extent of the Apostle's power to forgive and retain sins. This therefore was all that Christ himself possessed, while here on the earth. For he told them, that, as the Father had sent him, so he commissioned them ; i. e. with the same power to forgive and retain sins, which he possessed. There can be no question then, that, by forgiving the sins of the paralytic, our Lord meant nothing more than healing him of his disorder, taking away the consequence of that intemperance, of which he had been guilty. Hence our Lord replies to the malicious wresting of his words by the Pharisees, *Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee ? or to say Arise and walk ?* i. e. What matter is it about the expressions, which we use, if they are but intelligible ? Which best conveys the idea of cure, to say in the language of the prophets, which you cannot but understand,

* John xx. 21—23.

Thy sins be forgiven thee? or to say in plain common language, *Arise and walk?* Surely you display a captious disposition in cavilling about words. *But, that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on the earth to forgive sins*, to take away the diseases which come upon men for their sins, *then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house.*

Finally: The qualification of our Lord's power to forgive sins is worthy of particular notice. That ye may know that the Son of man hath authority, *on earth*, to forgive sins. Now the only place, for the actual pardon of transgressions against God, is the bar of final judgment at the end of the world. The whole of the present life is a day of probation. No man's character is ascertained, or really established, until his day of probation is ended. The sinner has indeed the promise of the remission of his sins, on condition of his *perseverance* in a reformation. But his sins are not actually forgiven until his perseverance is ascertained. It is only in the day of final judgment, that the iniquity of the *persevering penitent* will be pardoned. Our Lord therefore, by restricting his authority to forgive sins to his stay *upon the earth*, clearly shows, that he claimed no other power than the healing of diseases.

SECTION VIII.

ANOTHER argument, alleged in proof of the supreme divinity of Christ, is, that he was often WORSHIPPED, but did not forbid it ; as Paul and Barnabas and Peter and the Angel did, on the ground of its being inconsistent with the command of heaven, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.*

That Christ was, in very numerous instances, worshipped, while here, on earth, we readily acknowledge. And we contend, that he still ought to be worshipped in the same manner. But *in what manner* was he worshipped ? The answer to this question is of high importance to the argument. Before his supreme Deity can be ascertained, from the consideration of his being worshipped, it is necessary to make it appear with plainness and certainty, that he was worshipped as the supreme God.

The word προσκυνεω, which stands for the act of worship, is derived from κυων, a dog, and προς unto ; and is, literally, *to become a dog unto one.* The metaphorical sense of the term, the sense in which it is generally applied, is to shew homage or respect to a superior. There is, therefore, nothing in the word itself, which confines it to *divine* homage. The kind of homage, implied in any particular instance, is to be decided by the circumstances under which it is paid. Not unfrequently is it applied, in the scriptures, to express merely that respect, which it was customary, with the eastern nations, to pay to their kings, and great men, and, with the Jews, to their prophets, rulers, and learned doctors.

We now recite a few, out of the vast multitude of examples, both from the Old and New Testaments, where the Greek word προσκυνεω is used, which is translated *worship* in the command, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.* In most instances our translators have rendered this word *did obeisance, bowed himself, &c.* but we notify the English reader, that we shall uniformly render it *worshipped*, as it is always rendered in the New Testament.

In fulfilment of Joseph's prophetic dream, his brethren, when he was Lord in Egypt, *bowed down their heads and* **WORSHIPPED**.* When Jethro, Moses' father in law came where he encamped at the mount of God, *Moses went out to meet his father in law and* **WORSHIPPED** and *kissed him*.† Moses, surely, did not intend to pay him divine homage.—David, as he came out of the cave crying after Saul and saying, my Lord the King, *stooped with his face to the earth and* **WORSHIPPED**.‡ He was, at this time, the man after God's own heart, and cannot be supposed to have been guilty of idolatry. When Saul perceived the Ghost, whom the witch of Endor had raised, to be Samuel the prophet, *he stooped with his face to the ground and* **WORSHIPPED**.§ Saul meant to pay him the customary respect, due to an aged and venerable prophet; nor did Samuel forbid it. The man, who brought intelligence to David of the death of Saul and Jonathan, *fell to the earth and* **WORSHIPPED**.|| David was then king, and the man intended to pay him homage as his subject. The woman of Tekoah *fell down on her face to the ground, and* **WORSHIPPED**, and said, *help O King*.¶—David having granted liberty to Absalom to return, Joab, the general of his army, *fell to the ground on his face, and* **WORSHIPPED**, and *thanked the king*.** —*Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth and* **WORSHIPPED** the king, and said, *Let my lord king David live forever*.††——Even Nathan, the inspired prophet of God, **WORSHIPPED** *before the king with his face to the ground*.‡‡—When David delivered the kingdom into the hand of Solomon his Son, and became a subject, *he* **WORSHIPPED** (Solomon) *upon his bed*;§§ paid him the homage due to a king.—When the sons of the prophets saw Elisha, they said, *the spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha; and they came to meet him and* **WORSHIPPED** *to the ground before him*.||| So did the Shunamite woman.¶¶ The prophets, as well as the kings, received the customary homage.

* Gen. iv. 3—28.—† Exod. xviii. 7.—‡ I. Sam. xxiv. 8.—§ I. Sam. xxviii. 14.—|| I. Sam. i. 2.—¶ Chap. xiv. 4.—** Verse 22.—†† I. Kings, i. 31.—‡‡ Verse 23.—§§ Verse 47.—||| II. Kings ii. 15.—¶¶ Chap. iv. 37.

Particularly worthy of remark is the following instance ; in which the same word is applied, at the same time, both to Jehovah and a creature. David having conferred the throne upon Solomon, *all the congregation of the princes bowed down their heads and WORSHIPPED the Lord and the king.** They worshipped the Lord Jehovah, who in mercy had caused Solomon to become king ; and they worshipped Solomon, who was anointed to the royal office, *who sat on the throne of Jehovah, as king, instead of David his father.†* This passage our translators have rendered as above. Indisputable is it therefore, that the scriptures acknowledge two kinds of worship. Do the saints in heaven doxologize Him that sitteth upon the throne and the Lamb ? So the saints of God's militant church, in the discharge of their sacred duty, worshipped Jehovah and king Solomon. Thus it is becoming to be done to him, whom God delighteth to honor with an important office in his visible kingdom. And are we to infer the supreme divinity of Solomon, because he was worshipped in conjunction with Jehovah ! Neither is this to be inferred concerning Christ, because he is thus worshipped.

Shall we adduce any more instances ? Yes. For this is a subject on which some are very dull of hearing. " The king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and WORSHIPPED Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him."‡ Did Daniel forbid it ? Look and see. Did Nebuchadnezzar mean to worship him *as God* ? It immediately follows, " The king answered unto Daniel and said, of a truth it is that YOUR GOD is a God of Gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret.§

Another instance of this kind of respect or worship, paid to a mortal, known to be such and by a good and pious man, is recorded in the history of the Apostles. " As Peter was coming in Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and WORSHIPPED him."|| Peter, it seems, supposed he meant to pay him divine homage.

* I. Chron. xxix. 20. — † Verse 23. — ‡ Dan. ii. 46. — § 47. — || Acts x. 25.

But, whatever Peter may have conjectured on the occasion, Cornelius, it is evident knew perfectly well who Peter was. He had, just before, been favored with a heavenly vision, in which he was commanded to *send men to Joppa and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter*, and was informed *he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner; whose house is by the sea side; he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.* Without hesitation the good Cornelius, as directed, sent for Peter; and, having called together some friends, impatiently waited his arrival. As soon as he had entered the threshold of his door, the heart of the good Cornelius, whose prayers and alms had ascended before God as an acceptable memorial, and who gladly looked for instruction at the mouth of an Apostle of the Lord, leaped with exultation. *He fell down at the feet of Peter, and WORSHIPPED him*, knowing him to be Peter from Joppa. The fact is, this was the custom of the country, whenever they would pay respect to an official character, or to a public teacher. It was on this ground, solely, that the numerous instances of worship, which we have mentioned, were rendered. Solely on this ground, those, who were persuaded that he was the predicted king of the Jews, some great prophet, or the Messiah, worshipped Christ. In no instance does it appear, that any thing, beyond this customary respect, was intended, or was supposed by Christ to be intended. On the other hand, we have recorded an instance in which it is plain, that even this respect was paid in ridicule and contempt. *And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns and put it about his head, and began to salute him, Hail king of the Jews!—and bowing their knees WORSHIPPED him.** Ironically they paid that respect to him, which it was customary to pay to a king.

One more instance and we have done. Jesus Christ himself, declares to the church of Philadelphia, who had not denied his name, *Behold I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not; but do lie, behold I will make them to come and WORSHIP BEFORE THY FEET, and to know that I have loved*

* Mark xv. 17—19.

*thee.** Does our Lord advocate idolatry ! Does he not suppose a worship which is not divine ? Let us then hear no more of this boasted argument, in favor of the divinity of Christ, from the consideration that he was worshipped. Nor let any man accuse him of idolatry, who, believing that God has conferred upon Christ the first honors and dignities of his immortal kingdom, bows the knee before him, and pays him the homage of his high, though not supreme, respect. Do not the scriptures declare, that for his humiliation “ God hath highly exalted him and given a name which is above every name, that, at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow of those in heaven, and of those in earth, and of those under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father ?† He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not him that sent him, and who has set him King, upon his holy hill of Zion ; angels, principalities and powers being made subject unto him.”

* Rev. iii. 9.—† Phil. ii. 9—11.

SECTION IX.

ANOTHER consideration, urged in proof of the supreme divinity of Christ, is the NAMES or TITLES, by which God is known to his creatures, and by which he is distinguished from every other being, whether imaginary or real. It is contended, that Christ is styled GOD.

Were it true, that he has this title in the scriptures, yet it ought not to be considered proof, that he is the *supreme* Divinity. The word, God, in itself considered, denotes authority, power, and government only, whether derived or underived, real or imaginary. Hence, Angels, Heathen Deities, Jewish rulers, and those who governed other nations, are styled *Gods* in scripture. Our Saviour himself says; that *they are styled Gods, to whom the word of God came*.* Jehovah says to Moses, *I have made thee God to Pharaoh*.† Joseph in view of his station as Governor of Egypt, is called God. The word, God, is not restricted to signify the supreme Being. Therefore, the application of this word to Christ is not that evidence, which our opponents contend. It is evidence only, that he is exalted to a station of rule and government. It is of the same import with Lord; which no one supposes to indicate the supreme divinity of the multitudes to which it is applied, but to denote only, that they are masters, rulers, or governors. As the great Father of all is a ruler or governor, in the highest and most proper sense, the terms, Lord and God, are peculiarly applicable to him. They may also, be very properly bestowed upon Christ, whose power is derived from the Fountain of all power, and whom the great Father of all has been pleased to exalt to the government of his people.

But how, then, shall it be known when these terms are intended to designate the supreme and independent Divinity?

* John x. 35.—† Gen. xii. 1.

This is very easily known. When they are not connected with any circumstances, which would limit them in their application, to one known to be derived and dependent, but are used in a general or unlimited way, they are evidently to be considered as indicating the great Supreme. When it is said, that the Lord, or God, did thus and so, and there is nothing, in the connexion, to confine the action to any besides the great Supreme, it is very natural to consider these terms as bringing Him to our view ; because there is, properly speaking, only one Lord or God, though there are many so called. He is self existent, independent, omnipresent, and underived. But when it appears, from the connexion, that these names are applied to one, who is, either there or elsewhere, distinguished from the great Supreme, and represented inferior to him or dependent upon him, then these terms are to be considered as so applied, to denote that he is a being exalted to the station of rule, authority, or government.

These observations, we think, must gain credit with all ; for they are founded in common sense. According to this rule, there can never be any difficulty in distinguishing the Supreme from all others ; though they may, here and there, have the same style of Lord and God, which is more justly and peculiarly applicable to him. Beings are much better and more easily discriminated by a description of their qualities, properties, powers, or characters, than they can be by any names, which language may furnish. When, therefore, any one is styled Lord or God, we have only to consider the general description, which the scriptures give of him, and we shall be at no loss to determine in what sense he is Lord, or God. If there be any thing in the description, which indicates *dependence, derivation, natural or moral imperfection*, we may rest assured, let his title be ever so high, that he is not the infinite One, who is LORD and GOD SUPREME. If this rule be not allowed, it would be impossible to prove, that any, who are styled Lord or God, are not the infinite Supreme.

Were it granted then, that the titles God, Jehovah, and other titles of the kind, are applied to Christ, we are

not hence to conclude, that he is the great Supreme ; because the scriptures, in their description of his properties, though they ascribe to him high and exalted powers, inform us that these are bestowed or conferred upon him, by his God and Father ; and also, that God has GIVEN *unto him a name which is above every name*. Moreover, they often describe him as a distinct being from God ; obedient to his Father's authority ; not doing his own will, but the will of him, who sent him ; inferior to God, having the Father for his God ; actually humbling himself and putting off his riches ; being really one of the human race ; dying ; raised by God from the grave ; and exalted to glory by, and at his right hand. These are not figurative representations, in accommodation to the imbecility of the human understanding. They are without question, the representations of real facts. In view of such description, we cannot but be certain, that, when high titles are ascribed to Christ, they do not prove him the great Supreme : For, of HIM, none of these things can be predicated. His attributes will not, for a moment, admit of their supposition. Application of high titles, to Christ, such as Lord, God, &c. indicate, therefore, nothing more, than that power and government, to which God has exalted him.

In view of these observations, we consider some of the most noted passages only, which are attended with considerations, aside from the mere name, God, that are supposed to prove Christ the supreme divinity.

A PASSAGE of this description, is adduced from the epistle of Jude. *To the only wise God our Saviour*.* It is said that Christ, the Saviour, is here not only declared to be God, but *the only wise God* : By whom must certainly, be intended the great Supreme.

The scriptures, however, by no means appropriate the title of Saviour to Christ alone, as is here assumed. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ styles himself a Saviour.† This title belongs to him in the highest sense. Indeed he is expressly distinguished, as God our Saviour, from

* Verse 25.—† Isaiah xliii. 11.

Jesus Christ our Saviour. " But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly, **THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR.*** God is ultimately the only Saviour, Christ himself not excepted; though many instruments in the hand of God, and by whom the salvation of his people is accomplished, are styled Saviours. We are not authorised therefore, to refer this title, *the only wise God*, to Christ. Paul, in his first letter to Timothy, refers it to God the Father. *Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, "THE ONLY WISE GOD," be honor and glory forever and ever.*† Surely Christ is not the *invisible* One. In his letter to the Romans, he expressly distinguishes the only wise God from Jesus Christ. *To God only wise be glory, through Jesus Christ.*‡

Besides; Griesbach informs us, and a learned correspondent says, Wetstein does the same, that the Alexandrine, Vatican, Ephrem, and twelve other manuscripts, with the Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, and Arabic versions, read, after the words "God our Saviour" *through our Lord Jesus Christ*. So that this passage, also, expressly distinguishes Jesus Christ from the only wise God our Saviour, and represents him the medium, through whom the doxology is given to God. Jesus Christ, therefore, cannot be the only wise God our Saviour.

AND we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.§ This passage, it is said, asserts Jesus Christ to be the true God; i. e. God supreme.

The following considerations lead to a very different conclusion.

1. Jesus Christ is here styled *the Son of God*, and the Son of *him that is true*. Now, if we suppose Jesus

* Titus iii. 4-6. —† I Tim. i. 17. —‡ Rom. xvi. 27. —§ I John v. 20.

Christ to be *him that is true*, then it plainly follows, that he is the Son of himself ; for *him that is true* is declared to have a *Son Jesus Christ*. Can the Apostle be supposed to assert so gross an absurdity !

2. He is plainly distinguished from the true God, of whom, it is said, he has come to give us an understanding. Does the Apostle mean to affirm, that Christ has come to give us an understanding of himself ! Does he not assert, in the plainest manner, that he has come to give us an understanding of some other ? Even of the true God, who is here distinguished from him.

3. It is worthy of remark, that the word, *even*, is not in the original. The Apostle does not say, *we are in him that is true*, EVEN *in his Son Jesus Christ*. This would involve the absurdity, above mentioned, of making *him that is true* his own Son ; which arises wholly from the construction of our translators.

What the Apostle would affirm is, *We are in him that is true* BY *his Son Jesus Christ*. This saves from absurdity, and comports with the general testimony of scripture. No doctrine is more plainly and more frequently asserted, than that we are in God, or have communion and fellowship with him, *through the means of Jesus Christ his Son*. This translation of the passage will also stand the test of the severest criticism. The preposition *εν* is rendered *by* or *through*, we presume, a hundred times in the New Testament. In a passage perfectly parallel with this, our translators have rendered the first *εν* *in*, and the second *εν* *by*. *To him (God) be glory εν IN the church εν BY Jesus Christ.**

The whole passage, properly rendered, stands thus. " Moreover, we know that the Son of God hath come, and hath given us an understanding, that we might know the true One ; and we are in the true One, BY his Son Jesus Christ. The same is the true God and eternal life." The plain meaning is, that the Being, whom he styles *true*, of whom we have received a knowledge, and in whom we are *by* his Son Jesus Christ, is not an imaginary Deity, like those of the heathens, but the true and om-

* Eph. iii. 21.

ly living God, the source of all life to his creatures and especially, of eternal life to his saints. Or, the last clause may be thus rendered. *This is the true God, and this is life eternal* : i. e. it is life eternal to gain a knowledge of the true God, through his Son Jesus Christ ; agreeably to what our Lord says, in prayer to the Father, " This, is eternal life that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."*

Will it be said, that this construction makes the Apostle chargeable with repetition ? As we have already remarked, it is his character in all his writings. The repetition is made to impress the idea on their minds, that HE only is the true God, who is manifested by Jesus Christ ; and to keep those to whom he writes, from the false Gods of the land in which they dwelt. Hence he immediately adds, *Little children keep yourselves from idols*. Therefore, to apply the last phrase, *This is the true God*, to Jesus Christ, who is, immediately before, named as his Son, and as having made known to us him that is the true God, is a gross perversion of so plain and intelligible a passage of scripture.

ANOTHER passage, urged to this point, is, *Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God blessed forever*.†

On this passage various criticisms have been made by the learned, and, of it, various constructions have been given by different writers. And the proper translation, it must be acknowledged, is attended with difficulties, let who will be desirous of pressing it into the service of his peculiar sentiments. This is conceded by the critics among the advocates for the divinity of Christ, as well as by their opponents. The difficulty lies in making *ὁ ὢν* relative. Had the Apostle intended this, he would have written *ὅς ἐστιν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός* ; for this is invariably his manner, in all similar cases. The difficulty would indeed vanish, were it not for *θεός*. In that case, *ὁ ὢν* would be unquestionably relative ; and very numerous examples might be adduced in illustration. But, as it now

* John xvii. 3. —† Rom. ix. 5.

stands, we have never seen one, which will compare. We have never seen an instance, in which *ὁ ὧν* is used relatively, when an explanatory name or noun follows, to which the prepositive article belongs. We would not be too confident, but we very much doubt, whether an example of this kind can be produced, either from the Septuagint or New Testament.

Christie makes the following observations on the passage. "The Greek words are of ambiguous construction. By putting a full stop after the words *Christ came*, they may run thus, *God, who is over all, be blessed forever. Amen.* Or thus. *Who (Christ) is over all. God be blessed forever. Amen.* In this last method, Mr. *Locke* paraphrased them. If either of these two last translations are adopted, it will be the Father and not Christ, that is here styled *God over all*. And in favor of them, the use of the word *ευλογητοι*, *blessed*, in scripture, may be alleged. Mark xiv. 61. *Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed?* 2 Cor. xi. 31. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever more,* &c. See also Rom. i. 25. 2 Cor. i. 3. Eph. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3. In all which places the epithet *blessed*, is either appropriated to, or must be understood of the Father. The *Amen* too, which the Apostle adds, applies better to a doxology than a narrative. It appears that this place, was read in this or a similar manner, in the first ages of the church, from the language of several ancient writers. To call Christ *the God over all*, is declared in the Apostolical constitutions, and epistles of Ignatius, to be heretical. *Origen* says, it is rashness to suppose him to be so, as being inconsistent with Christ's own words, *My Father is greater than I*. And *Eusebius*, through all his books against Marcellus, lays it down as the constant known doctrine of the church, that Christ himself is not *ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεός* and *ὁ ἐπεκτείναι τῶν ὅλων θεός*, *the God over all*; but that these are the peculiar titles of the Father. And he particularly affirms, that whosoever applies these titles to Christ *cannot be a pious person.*"*

* Christie's Discourses, page 239—40.

But did the passage, clearly and decidedly, stand in the Greek as it stands in our English translation, it would by no means establish the *independent* divinity of Christ. It is mentioned, as an honorary distinction of the Jews, that Christ, as to the flesh, descended from them ; and his character, as the Head of God's church, or Ruler over all, is introduced in illustration of that distinction, or, in order to render it the more conspicuous. The phrase, *God over all*, is but the same thing as *Lord over all*, *Governor over all*, *Head over all*: To which station it is asserted, that his God and Father has exalted Christ. He is not, therefore, to be considered God over all, *in the highest sense* of the phrase. *It is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.**

We conclude with the final remark on this passage of the ingenious and candid Dr. Mc. Knight, whose orthodoxy has not been questioned. "It need not surprise us, that Christ, in the flesh, is called "*God over all, blessed forever*;" since *God hath highly exalted him* in the human creature, and *given him a name above every name*. Phil. ii. 9. *And hath put all things under his feet*. I Cor. xv. 27. *And will judge the world in righteousness by that man, whom he hath ordained*. Acts xvii. 31."

And Thomas said unto him my Lord and my God. It is contended, that Thomas here calls Christ, his Lord and his God, in unqualified terms ; and that Christ instead of rebuking him for so doing, implicitly acknowledges the appellation to be just, by saying unto him *because thou hast seen me thou hast believed ; blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed*. But did Thomas really believe, that the being, whom he had seen *expire on the cross*, and whom he now saw *to be risen from the dead*, was the everliving and unchangeable God ! Whence did he obtain this extraordinary conviction ? Was it a natural inference from the fact, that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth had been raised from his grave ? This, however, was all that Thomas saw : And, if this engendered such conviction in his mind, he was as credulous now, as unbelieving before.

* 1 Cor. xv. 27.

If we attend to the account with a little accuracy, we shall find that the disciple was not quite so credulous, as our opponents would make him.

The context informs, that Thomas was not present with the disciples, when Christ made his first appearance. They testified, that Jesus had risen from the dead, and affirmed, that they had seen the Lord. He had no faith in their testimony ; declared that he would not believe, unless he should see in his hands the print of the nails, and put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side. Now what was it that Thomas refused to believe ? Did he refuse to believe Christ to be the supreme Divinity ? Was this what his fellow disciples had testified concerning Jesus ? The grand and only point of unbelief respected Christ's resurrection. Of what then was he convinced, when our Lord said to him, *Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands ; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side ; and be not faithless but believing ?* Of that only, concerning which he had been before an unbeliever ; to wit, the actual resurrection of Christ from the dead. This was what our Lord would have him believe, when he addressed him as above. And this must be what is implied, in his address to Christ on the occasion. For the remark led our Lord to reply *Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed.* The faith of Thomas, expressed in his declaration, was, if we may credit Christ's words, founded on his sight, on what was *exhibited to his senses.* Thomas believed what he saw ; and what he, before, declared he would not believe, unless he should see. He believed in what his brethren had previously testified, that Christ was actually risen from the dead ; of which he had, now, the evidence of his own senses. This therefore must be the faith, which Thomas expressed ; for it is certain he did not *see* the INVISIBLE GOD.

Was the resurrection of Christ a proof of his supreme and independent divinity ? Did he rise by his own inherent and underived power ? We know indeed it is said, that he was raised, *because it was not possible that he should be holden of death.* But was this a physical, a nat-

ural impossibility? If it were, it must have prevented him from dying at all; from being holden by death, a single moment. The Apostle Peter, in this very discourse, explains it to be a *moral* impossibility, arising wholly from a prediction of David, who speaks in the person of Christ, and says to God, "*My flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, and neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy one to see corruption.*"* An inspired prophet having predicted Christ's resurrection, it was impossible that he should be holden by death.

Did he rise by his own inherent and underived power? We know indeed, that he said, "*I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again.*"† But why stop here, as the advocates for his divinity, from this declaration, always do? He immediately adds, "*This commandment have I received of my father.*" Surely his having received authority, from the Father, to lay down his life and to obtain it again, is very far from being proof, that he rose by his own inherent, underived power. Nor do the scriptures, any where assert, that he raised himself from the dead. They, uniformly, ascribe his resurrection to God. Paul says, *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, raised him from the dead.*‡

The resurrection of Christ affords then, no proof of his supreme divinity. It is proof only, that he was the Son of God, or Messiah. Hence Paul says, *Christ is powerfully declared to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead.*§ And hence Christ himself told the Jews, *When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am the Messiah, and that I do nothing of myself: But as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.*||

The expression of Thomas cannot, therefore be reasonably considered as importing any thing further, than that Christ was risen from the dead; and, as a consequence, that he was really the Messiah. This is what he had disbelieved. The disciples, having no idea that the Christ was to suffer, were all perfectly confounded at the circum-

* Psalm xvi. 10. —† John x. 18. —‡ Eph. i. 17—20. —§ Rom. i. 4. —|| John viii. 28.

stance of his death. It made them unbelievers. For a season they were universally staggered in their faith : Though, when they reflected on the miracles he had performed, they were greatly perplexed in their minds.— Hence, when the two went from Jerusalem to Emmaus, and were overtaken by Christ, who found them with sadness reasoning upon the subject, they say, *We trusted that it had been he, who should have redeemed Israel.** The resurrection of Christ, however, established the fact, in the minds of all, that he was the Messiah. Of this Thomas was convinced, when furnished with the desired evidence that he was actually risen. The resurrection of Jesus, and consequently that he was the Messiah, were the only things, of which Thomas could be convinced, from what he saw. And this is all that can be supposed to be contained in his declaration, *My Lord and my God.*

Accordingly it is worthy of remark, that the passage is elliptical : The sentence is not completed. Especially is this manifest from the Greek, which does not admit of its being an address. Both *κύριος* and *θεός*, Lord and God, are in the nominative, and require some verb to succeed, in order to make sense. *Θεός* God, is, indeed, often used, for the vocative. But we have never seen an instance of this use of *κύριος* Lord. It is believed, that there is no example of it in the scriptures. Were it an apostrophe, or an appellation of address to Christ, the Evangelist would have written it *κύριε μὲν καὶ θεε μὲν*, or more properly *κύριε ὁ θεός μὲν*. The passage is evidently elliptical. Something must be supplied in order to complete the sentence. Were there any thing in the context, or in the circumstance of a mere resurrection, which would render it necessary to suppose Thomas convinced of the supreme Deity of Christ, it might be proper to fill up this sentence thus, *οὐ εἶ ὁ κύριος μὲν καὶ ὁ θεός μὲν*, *Thou art my Lord and my God.* But, as this was not the point in question, as Thomas' faith was founded on what he *saw*, and as the resurrection of Jesus could have afforded no proof of his independent divinity, but only that he was the Son of God, Son of man, Messiah, or the Christ, which, in con-

* Luke, xxiv. 21,

sequence of his death, Thomas had disbelieved, it is most natural to complete the passage in such a manner, as will amount to an acknowledgment, that Jesus had, really, risen from the dead, and was, indeed, the Messiah. It will then stand thus, ὁ κυριος μὲ καὶ ὁ θεος μὲ πεποιμεν τετο, *My Lord and my God hath done this* ; hath raised you from the dead, and, by so doing, given testimony that you are no impostor, but the true Messiah. This we judge to be the rational, consistent and true account of the matter. The passage therefore, instead of being proof of the supreme divinity of Christ, is in its connexion, full and decided proof against it ; for the supreme God is EVERLIVING and UNCHANGEABLE.

“LOOKING for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.”* It is contended, that Jesus Christ must here be declared the great God, seeing we never read of the appearing of God the Father.

The original, however, does not say *the glorious appearing of the great God*, but ἐπιφανειαν τῆς δόξης τῆς μεγάλης Θεοῦ the appearing of the glory of the great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is not necessary to consider ἐπιφανειαν τῆς δόξης to be an hebraism for *the glorious appearing*. The scripture informs, that, at the second coming of Christ, the glory of the Father is, also, to appear. In this passage, there is plainly allusion to our Lord's declaration. “Of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, (in the glory of his Father) and of the holy Angels.”† “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels.”‡ If any one be disposed to construe the passage thus, “The appearing of the glory of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ,” then Christ will be declared *the glory of the great God*, according to the description given of him elsewhere, *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image*

* Titus, ii. 13. —† Luke, ix. 26. —‡ Mat. xvi. 27.

of his person. Neither interpretation, however, makes Jesus Christ to be the great God.*

“WHO (Jesus Christ) was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he, who hath builded the house, hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.”† It is contended that Christ is here considered to be that God, who built all things; i. e. the universal Creator; and must, therefore, be God supreme.

We cannot, at present, go into a full discussion concerning the true import of this passage, seeing it would engross several pages. Any one, who will take the trouble to consult Dr. Mc. Knight's critical remarks upon it, will feel ashamed to adduce it as proof, that Christ is God the Creator. We shall only give the Dr.'s comment, which, in his notes, he illustrates and substantiates in the most convincing manner. “Who (Christ Jesus) in forming the gospel church, was faithful to God, who appointed him his apostle or lawgiver, even as Moses also, was faithful in forming all the parts of the Jewish church, God's house at that time. But although the faithfulness of Jesus was not greater than that of Moses, he was counted by God worthy of more power than Moses, inasmuch as he, who hath formed the services of the church, not for his own benefit, but for the benefit of others, is a more honorable person than any member of the church; such as Moses was, who needed the services of the Jewish church, equally with the people. Besides, every religious society is formed by some one; but he who hath formed all righteous communities, and religious societies, is God; who having delegated his authority to his Son, hath made him Lord of all.”

This passage instead of proving that Christ is the supreme God, is striking proof that he is not.

1. It declares the power of Christ, relative to the christian church, to be as much delegated power, as that of Moses in relation to the Jewish church.

* Vid. Mc. Knight in loco.—† Heb. iii. 4.

2. It as much distinguishes Christ from God, as it distinguishes Moses from God. *He was faithful to him that appointed him, as also was Moses.*

3. Christ is considered an Apostle or lawgiver, subordinate to God, as fully as Moses is thus considered; though he is accounted an Apostle, or lawgiver, of greater eminence than Moses.

These are the most noted passages, commonly adduced in proof of the supreme Divinity of Christ, from the consideration of his being styled God, under such circumstances as are supposed to represent him God supreme.

It is also asserted, with confidence, that Christ is styled JEHOVAH, and under such circumstances, as prove him that supreme God of the Old Testament, concerning whom the Psalmist says, *Thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth.** Jehovah is said to be a term expressive of self existence and independence; and to be applied only to the first cause and origin of all things.

A number of conjectures and fancies, concerning the meaning of this word, is, indeed, to be found in the Jewish cabbala, from whence some zealous christians have taken the liberty to borrow. But, as they are matters of no consequence to the argument, we shall not trouble the reader with a dissertation upon their merits. We only ask, where is this name applied to the Lord Jesus? It is said to have this application, in the prophecy of Jeremiah. *"This is the name whereby he shall be called the Lord (in Hebrew, Jehovah) our righteousness."*† On this we submit the following remarks.

1. It does not say that he *is* Jehovah our righteousness, but only that he shall bear this style. *"This is the name whereby he shall be called."* We allow that the scriptures bestow very high appellations upon Christ; but since they also declare, that, in consideration of his obedience unto death, *"God hath given him a name above every name,"* the argument from these appellations,

* Psalm, lxxxiii. 18.—† Jerem. xxiii. 6.

affords us no conviction that they belong unto him in that highest sense, in which they belong unto the supreme Being, who has honored him with such superior names. Although, therefore, it be said of Christ, "*His name is called the Word of God*;"* to indicate him the peculiar medium through whom God proclaims his will; also "*his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God* (or a mighty God) *the everlasting father*,† (or the Father of the perpetual age, the christian dispensation) which, it is said immediately after "*the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform*," or see bestowed upon him; yet these and other passages of the same description, are nothing in point for the establishment of the doctrine of Christ's divinity. 2. What is here said concerning Christ, is said, by the same prophet, concerning the city Jerusalem. *And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord (Jehovah) our righteousness*.‡ Would it be good logic to conclude hence, that the holy city must, though contradictory to reason, have a divine nature, and be, really, the supreme and self-existent Jehovah! What if some one, under pretence of being an implicit believer in the plain declarations of inspiration, should advocate the sentiment? How would our opposers refute such antagonist? Were they to reason on the subject, and point out its superlative absurdity would he not, at once and in a fit of zeal, cry out, that they are determined to set up their own reason against the plain and express declarations of scripture, and refuse to receive the doctrine, because it is a dark mystery beyond their finite comprehension? Would he not appeal to them that they believe in the supreme divinity of Christ, upon this very principle, and that they make the same outcry, when pinched by rational argument, against those, who deny the doctrine? Would he not say, that the words are plain, that the declaration is unambiguous, "*This is the name wherewith she shall be called Jehovah our righteousness*?" and to put any other constructions upon the passage, than that Jerusalem is, in reality, the supreme Jehovah, is but twisting the scriptures and explaining them away. Would

* Rev. xix. 13. —† Isaiah, ix. 6. —‡ Jerem. xxxiii. 16.

he not say, Jehovah is an incommunicable name, denoting eternity and self existence ? and, therefore, the holy city must necessarily be the supreme God ? And, since Jerusalem is styled "*Jehovah our righteousness*," would he not demand, that she be received as such ; and absolutely refuse communion, yea, shut out from fellowship, as *damnable heretics* and *denying the Lord that bought them*, all, who could not be convinced that such construction of the passage is proper, or who should refuse to subscribe to this absurd and unintelligible doctrine ? Moreover, would he not confidently affirm, that Jerusalem and Jesus Christ must be the very same being, inasmuch as they, both, have the very same title, and are styled "*our righteousness* ? And, since one is called *she* and the other *he*, would he not justly conclude, that, though numerically the same infinite Being, they are nevertheless distinct persons in the Godhead ? And, finally, would he not say, that *all things are possible with God* ; that it is as easy for him to take the city Jerusalem into personal union with himself, as to do any thing else ; as it is to take a created dependent human nature into such mysterious union ?

This, reader, is talking and declaiming exactly in the strain of those, who pretend that all wisdom, on this subject, belongeth unto them, and that they only are the advocates for the faith once delivered to the saints.* But

* It is truly a melancholy reflection, to a considerate mind, that, in this third century of the glorious reformation from Papal errors and absurdities, Protestants still take the ground, on which their enemies stand in the defence of their monstrous opinions. As melancholy as it may be, it is however a fact. In opposing the Papists, upon the doctrine of transubstantiation, the advocates of the supreme Deity of Christ reason as we do against them. In opposing us, they immediately change sides, and adopt the very arguments and outcry of the Papists, respecting the opposers of the doctrine of transubstantiation. The attention of the reader is requested, while we illustrate this fact : A fact, which contains much useful instruction, and is calculated to cast light upon the subject in controversy. *Then said Jesus unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day ; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is, that bread which cometh down from heaven ; not as*

to return. *His name shall be called Jehovah our righteousness.* We have adduced one example of the application of this high title to something else, than the self-existent Being. We will venture, with the permission of our opponents, to adduce a few more. Christ is here called,

*your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.** These words the Papists take in their literal sense; and contend that we are to eat the real flesh and to drink the real blood of Christ, in order to eternal life. In support of their interpretation, they adduce the declaration of Christ, at the institution of the supper; in which he expressly says concerning the bread, *This is my body,* "and" *this cup is the New Testament in my blood.* They hence contend that the bread and wine, used in the Lord's supper are converted into the real body and blood of Christ, whenever and wherever it is properly administered; and that whosoever eats and drinks at the table of the Lord, eats his real flesh and drinks his real blood. This doctrine is called transubstantiation, or the conversion of one substance into another.

Many arguments are used by Protestants to convince them of their stupid error. We tell them, that their doctrine is pregnant with the highest absurdities; that, if their interpretation be just, then, when Christ said *This is my body,* he must have held his own body in his hand: That, as he ate of that bread he must have eaten himself: That, notwithstanding he was eaten by himself and disciples, his body remained whole and entire as before: That, if their doctrine be true, then flour is flesh, and the juice of the vegetable grape is human blood: That, then, the flesh and blood of Christ must have been consumed millions of times, even as often as the supper has ever been received: That, then, either Christ must have as many distinct bodies, as there are different churches where the supper is celebrated; or that the body of Christ must be in a thousand different places, at one and the same time. Hence Protestants feel authorized to consider this language as figurative, and to construe it in consistency with common sense.

In reply, the Papists say, It is, notwithstanding these things, a solemn truth: For our Lord says, in the most decided and positive manner, *This is my body: And my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed: He that eateth of this bread shall live forever: And except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you.* This is plain, simple, unqualified language; and the doctrine must be received as truth, though it cannot be conceived, understood, or comprehended by finite minds. It is a MYSTERY; a sacred and glorious MYSTERY. And he, who will not credit it, and receive it as an article of the christian faith, sets up his own reason against divine revelation; wrests the scriptures in accommodation to his feeble conceptions; leans to his own understanding; and refuses to bow down to the word of God. Such a man can be no christian; he is not a disciple; one who is willing to be taught by Christ; but a damnable heretic and unbeliever.

It is vain for Protestants to urge, that the language is capable of a different interpretation: That we are not to suppose God has revealed a doctrine, which is absurd; that God has given us a rational understanding, and we are bound to exercise it, in judging what the true doctrine of the word of God is; or, what is the intention and meaning of the sacred

* John v. 53—58.

In Hebrew, *Jehovah—Tsidkenu*. Abraham, that Father of the faithful, called the mount, on which he was to sacrifice his Son, "Jehovah—Jireh." "Moses built an altar and called it JEHOVAH—Nissi"—Gideon built an altar and called it "JEHOVAH—Shallum." Yea, when David brought up the Ark, from the house of Obededom, to the city of David, he styles it, in his song on the occasion, both *God and Jehovah; God is gone up*

writers, in the language which they use; that unless we do this, the scriptures may easily be made to speak any thing, and every thing, however inconsistent or contradictory.

No, reply the Papists: Christ's words are plain. The expressions are simple and definite. They are wholly free from figure: And we are to receive it as a truth; which Christ himself has declared, *This is my body*. We know, indeed, that we cannot comprehend or explain it. Sufficient for us, that the Lord Jesus hath declared it to be a truth. It is a MYSTERY, a secret thing, which belongeth unto God; and we have no right to pry into it, or to reason at all about it. The world is full of mysteries. All, that we see around us, is, as to the mode or manner of existence, a perfect mystery; entirely beyond the human understanding. *Who, then, by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?* The mystery of the doctrine ought not, therefore, to prevent its reception.

Nay, more. It is a fundamental doctrine, on which rests our eternal life. Christ says, *Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you. He, only, who eateth me shall live by me*. And the Apostle Paul says, *that he, who discerneth not the Lord's body, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*. He, therefore, who denies this holy and blessed mystery, does not discern the Lord's body, and is a damnable heretic and unbeliever. Hence they consider Protestants to be apostates from the faith, and will have no fellowship, or communion with them. Yea, when the bread and wine of the Eucharist are carried about their streets, such is the amazing influence of their credulous faith, that, if a Protestant happen to pass by, refusing to take off his hat and to bow down on his knees, in honor of the Lord Jesus, who is supposed to be really present, they are filled with horror at his dreadful impiety! They are shocked at the indignity, which he casts upon the Lord of life!!!

This is PAPACY. It is from this, Protestants have professedly reformed. From such IMPLICIT FAITH, they have, professedly, made their escape. Yet, strange to tell! in flying from this irrational church, they have brought with them some of her gross absurdities; and, in order to support them, the convenient doctrines also of MYSTERY and IMPLICIT FAITH. They reason against us, who deny the supreme Deity of Christ, as the Papists do against them. They make the same outcry. They pass the same condemnation. And the minds of some are filled with the same horror at our gross impiety! Are no less shocked, that we should refuse that *supreme honor* to the messenger, which we give to HIS GOD AND FATHER, who sent him!!!

Notwithstanding the small capacity I possess, and standing, in this region, alone as I do, I cannot but pity, from my heart, both the Papist and the Papal Protestant.

with a shout, the Lord (Heb. Jehovah) with the sound of the trumpet. Thus evident is it, that Jehovah is not a name appropriated only to the supreme God. The application of *Jehovah—Tsidkenu* to Christ, no more proves therefore, that he is the Great Supreme, than the application of *Jehovah—Alehim* to the Ark, and *Jehovah—Fireh, Nissi, and Shallum* to the other things named, proves that they are.

Finally, It ought not, to be overlooked, that this passage is, with equal propriety and good criticism, capable of a different translation. *This is the name, by which Jehovah shall call him, our righteousness.* Thus it is translated by Patrick, an eminent and orthodox divine of the church of England. So that, after all, it does not appear that Christ is here styled Jehovah.

ANOTHER passage, urged under this head of proof, is, *The stone, (Christ) which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even unto them, that stumble at the word.** Yet it is said in the Old Testament, *Sanctify Jehovah of Hosts, and let him be your fear and let him be your dread; and he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both houses of Israel.†* It is hence concluded, that Christ must be the Jehovah of Hosts.

Christ crucified, Paul informs, *was to the Jews a stumbling block.* They expected no suffering Messiah. But how came they by this notion, that the Messiah was not to die? His death was certainly, predicted in the word of Jehovah's prophecy, from whence they should have learned the doctrine. The Jews, therefore, first stumbled at Jehovah's word, and perverted it to something else. Had not Jehovah of Hosts first become a stumbling block and a rock of offence, by the word of his prophecy, to both houses of Israel, they would never have stumbled at *Christ crucified*. Their stumbling at Christ crucified, who herein became the fulfilment of Jehovah's word, was stumbling at Jehovah of Hosts himself, who had given

* I Pet. ii. 8. —† Isaiah viii. 14.

them the prediction. In perfect accordance with this interpretation, and to prevent all mistake, the Apostle is very particular to observe, that Christ became a stumbling block *even to them that stumble at the word.*

To this day the Jews stumble at Jehovah's word concerning the sufferings of the Messiah. It is on account of his sufferings and humiliation only, that they reject him. In doing which, they reject Jehovah of Hosts who sent him. *He that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. He that acknowledgeth not the Son, the same hath not the Father. If ye had known me ye should have known my Father also ; and vice versa.*

ANOTHER passage, under this head, is, " Mine eyes have seen the King, the Jehovah of Hosts."* That this personage was Christ is said to be evident from the testimony of John. *But though he (Christ) had done many miracles, yet they believed not on him ; that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord who hath believed our report ? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed ? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart ; that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias when he saw his glory and spake of him.†*

Spake of whom ? And whose glory did the prophet see ? Clearly of no other than the Jehovah of Hosts, whose train filled the temple ; a view of whom led the prophet to cry out, " *Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amidst a people of unclean lips ; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.*" A most sublime and wonderful description of his vision of the glory of the Lord of hosts Isaiah has given, in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. At the time of this vision, he was commanded to prophecy what is quoted by the Evangelist, concerning the hardness of the Jews. Now the inspiration of vision was considered, by the Jews, as the highest kind of inspiration ; and the things, predict-

* Isaiah vi. 5.—† John xii. 37—41.

ed under such circumstance, to be the most sure of accomplishment. They were considered as infallibly destined to come to pass.

The plain account of the whole matter, therefore, is this. The Evangelist, having mentioned the ill success of Christ with the Jews, notwithstanding he wrought many miracles before them, undertakes to account for it, by introducing a very remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, uttered on an occasion, when he had a most near and intimate view of the Lord of Hosts; and on which occasion, he speaks concerning him as recited above. "It is no wonder, says the Evangelist, seeing Isaiah predicted the blindness and hardness of the Jews, when under the extraordinary inspiration of actual vision, that it should take effect; that the Jews should be able to withstand the claims of Christ, though substantiated by numerous and convincing miracles; especially when it is considered, that the prophecy is couched in such terms, as would seem to render it impossible that they should believe, let the miraculous attestations be ever so convincing and decisive." The Evangelist evidently urges the strong terms of the prophecy, as one reason, why they did not believe. And he urges, as another reason, that the prophet delivered this prophecy when under the most extraordinary afflatus of divine inspiration. Why any one should suppose, that the Evangelist would make Jesus Christ that Jehovah of Hosts, whose glory the prophet saw and of whom he spake, when he prophesied of the hardness and blindness of Israel, is not easily divined; for there is nothing in the passage, which has the least appearance of it. The nearest antecedent of the relative, *him*, is the Lord of Hosts. There is neither necessity nor propriety in referring it to Christ, an antecedent more remote.

ANOTHER passage adduced to prove that Christ is Jehovah, is, "*Thy maker is thy husband; the Jehovah of Hosts is his name, the Redeemer and the holy one of Israel.*"* Now it is said, that, since Jesus Christ is styl-

* Isaiah liv. 5.

ed the *husband of the Church*, and the *Redeemer*, he must be the Jehovah of Hosts.

But this mode of reasoning will prove more than the advocates for Christ's supreme Divinity would be willing to acknowledge. That its absurdity be exposed, let us pursue it a little.

Paul calls the gospel *his* gospel. He calls it, also, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore Paul is Jesus Christ.—Jesus Christ is called the Apostle of God. So is Paul. Therefore Jesus Christ is that bigoted Pharisee, who persecuted the church.—God says, "Besides me there is no Saviour." Yet all those, who delivered Israel, are styled *Saviours*. Therefore Joshua, Sampson, Jephtha and others are the true God, the Jehovah of Hosts.—Jehovah is styled the King of Israel. So is David. Therefore David is Jehovah.—The Lord says "I am God and beside me there is none else." This title, however, is applied to Moses, to the Jewish Rulers, and to the Angels. Therefore they are God, beside whom there is none else.—Jesus Christ is called God's servant. So is Job. Therefore Job is Jesus Christ.

However ridiculous all such reasoning, it is the constant refuge both of learned and unlearned advocates for the supreme Deity of our Lord. Whatever name, or title be applied to God, if they find the same applied also to Christ, they marshal it into argument, and press it into proof of his divinity.

An additional passage of this kind, in which they feel confident the argument is theirs, is, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."* Now this is the style of Jehovah: "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Jehovah of Hosts, I am the first and I am the last, and beside me there is no God."†

But Christ is not styled Jehovah in this passage. And it no more follows, that he is the Jehovah of Hosts mentioned, than that this is true concerning those, to whom the word of God came, and who, on that account, are styled Gods in scripture. The term God, generally de-

* Rev. i. 11.—† Isaiah, xlv. 6.

notes the true and everliving God, but not always. And very certain is it that the phrase, Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, used in application to one, who, in the same place, is said to have been *dead*, cannot mean to designate the unchangeable and everliving Jehovah. A further account of this passage shall be given presently.

“THE reader’s attention to this argument will be relieved, when we shall have considered one more text from the Old Testament, to prove that Christ is Jehovah.” “Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me ; and Jehovah,* whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.” Malachi, iii. 1. “The messenger sent to prepare the way, it is well known, was John the Baptist. And the messenger of the covenant was Jesus Christ, Jehovah, whom the faithful sought, who came suddenly to his temple, and in whom they delighted. This will appear, if we attend to the New Testament. Christ, speaking of John his harbinger, saith, “This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.” Mat. xi. 10. “And Luke applies to John the words of Esaias, the prophet, saying, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths strait.” Luke iii. 4. Expressly to our purpose is the Angel Gabriel, concerning John. “Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him, in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just ; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Luke i. 16—17. Let it here be noted, that the expression, “Prepare the way of the Lord,” is in Hebrew “Prepare the way of *Jehovah*.” Isaiah xl. 3.—Now as John was sent to prepare the way of Jehovah, and, in doing this, we find he actually prepared the way of Christ ; it undeniably follows that Christ is Jehovah, whose way

* The word in the Hebrew is not Jehovah, but a word, which may be applied to any Lord, Governor, or Master.

he prepared, and for whom he made ready a people, prepared for the Lord. This conclusion receives strength from the prophecy of Zecharias. "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." Luke i. 76. The Highest is confessedly, a title given alone to the supreme God. But it is here given to Christ; therefore, Christ is the supreme God, Jehovah."*

The following considerations, however, will lead, if we do not mistake, to a much better interpretation of this famous passage, urged, with so much confidence, as proof that Christ is the supreme God and Jehovah.

1. The person, spoken of by Malachi, is styled *the messenger of God*. "Behold I send my messenger." Whether this refer to our Lord, or to John, we shall not spend time to inquire. All acknowledge, that *the messenger of the covenant* refers to Jesus Christ. Here, then, is one mark of the inferiority of Christ. He is represented as sent to fulfil the covenant, which Jehovah had made with his people. To suppose him to be Jehovah, is to suppose *two* Jehovahs, one of whom sent the other; or, if there be one only, the conclusion then is, that he both sends and is sent by himself. Which we beg leave to rank high on the list of absurdities. But 2. We are plainly and clearly told *in what manner* the Lord would come to his temple; to wit, *by the messenger of the covenant*, who should come in the Lord's name. *And the Lord shall come suddenly to his temple, EVEN THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT, whom ye delight in*: That is, the Lord's coming to his temple is to take place, by the coming of the messenger of the covenant.

God is said to come unto his people, when he makes a peculiar manifestation of himself, through some medium, to them. Indeed it is impossible to conceive of God's coming to a people, otherwise than by an Angel, or messenger, or by manifesting himself through some medium. He is himself invisible. Hence, when God came down, upon Mount Sinai, to give the law to the children of Israel,

* Alexander, page 12.

It was done, as the sacred writers inform us, through the medium of an angel. In no instance, did God ever come to the Jews or to the patriarchs, in person, but always by an Angel, or messenger, who spake and acted in his name. It is the only way in which Deity can come. He is omnipresent. Accordingly, this is the manner in which it is said, that the Lord shall come to his temple. He shall not come in person; but *the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in*, shall come; which is the same as the coming of the Lord himself. /

This passage, in Malachi, contains its own exposition. It accounts also, for what is said concerning John, as the precursor of Jehovah and the Highest. If Jehovah came suddenly to his temple, in the person of his messenger, even the messenger of the covenant, Jesus Christ; then John, in going before Jesus Christ, might, with propriety, be said to go before Jehovah: For he went before him, by whom Jehovah came to his temple.

Thus have been considered the principal passages, adduced to prove the independent Deity of Christ, from the consideration of divine names, said to be applied to him. They do not, it is thought, stand the test of fair and accurate examination.

SECTION X.

WE now proceed to examine such passages as are said to indicate, or imply TWO NATURES in Christ, a divine and human nature.

*“AND without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the gentiles believed on in the world, received up into glory.”**

On this we submit the following remarks ;—

1. The passage does not say, or suggest, that the mystery consists in a supposed union of two natures in Christ. It does not say, that the mystery consists in God's being manifest in the flesh, any more than in the circumstance of his being *“preached unto the Gentiles,”* or *“believed on in the world:”* In which things there is, manifestly, no mystery, in any sense of the word. The mystery is declared to be a mystery of *Godliness*. And what is *Godliness*? It is virtue, piety, religion. The word never denotes the conduct of God towards man, but the conduct of men towards God and one another. It is used eight times in this epistle, and invariably has this signification. The mystery, therefore, does not respect the union of Deity to the flesh ; but piety, virtue, or religion, adapted to human practice.

2. The Apostle, neither in the preceding nor subsequent context, is treating of the character, or nature of Christ, but of *the gospel*, as a system of *faith* or *holy living*. It is not a little strange therefore, that he should abruptly leave his subject of doctrine or truth, and introduce, in a disconnected manner, a sentence concerning the character of Christ. For, though Christ's character be a matter of gospel doctrine, yet, as the Apostle is treating of *the truth* or *faith in general*, it surely did not comport with his subject to introduce a certain *mysterious particular*.

* I Tim. iii. 16.

Besides; the gospel faith, or system of christianity, is styled a mystery, in verse 9, of the context. It is often so termed, in various parts of scripture, as being the true and profitable system of moral virtue, in opposition to that taught in the heathen mysteries. The probability therefore is high, that the Apostle continues his subject in this passage; that he is not speaking of a *person*, but of the *christian doctrine*.

3. That he is not speaking of any mysterious incarnation of God in the person of Christ, is evident from what immediately follows. They, who suppose this, must suppose he descends to this particular, as being a peculiarly important doctrine, and lying at the foundation of the christian scheme. No other reason can be assigned, why the Apostle should introduce this, in preference to any other article of faith. Why then, when he immediately proceeds to speak of an approaching apostacy from the true doctrine, does he not mention a denial of Christ's divinity, the supposed fundamental article of the gospel creed? He notices *giving heed to seducing spirits, to doctrines concerning demons, forbidding to marry, abstaining from meats, and profane old wives fables*; but not a word about denying the incarnation of God. Had the Apostle considered this a true doctrine, and so important, as to break upon it abruptly; a denial of it would doubtless have been noted among the items of apostacy. We may therefore reasonably conclude, that the person of Christ, as mysteriously composed of two natures, is not the subject of discourse; but that he treats concerning the system of gospel faith in general.

4. Of this we have still further and more substantial evidence. The learned Mill, an orthodox man of high authority, and who was eminently versed in the ancient Fathers, confesses, that this text was never exhibited by the advocates for the Deity of Christ, in opposition to those who denied his divinity, until nearly four hundred years after Christ. His words are these. "No one, that I know, of all the Catholic Fathers, who professedly collected all the texts of scripture in favor of Christ's di-

vinity, ever alleged this text before the year 380 : Gregory Nyssen first of all.* Now during the violent controversy between the Arians and Athanasians, had this text stood as it now stands in our common copy, it is utterly impossible that it should not have been adduced, as a strong and mighty contradiction to the Arian hypothesis. We say *utterly impossible* ; Because, it is well known, the bible was ransacked by Trinitarians on the subject ; and, so fond were they of pressing every thing into their service, that the circumstance of the King of Israel's striking three times on the ground and then staying, and many other things still more impertinent, were urged, among the number of proofs, in support of their doctrine. There can be no reason, therefore, to doubt, that this passage has been tampered with, by some Athanasian zealot, as has confessedly been the case with several others.

5. Accordingly, the Clermont and other ancient manuscripts with the Vulgate, Syriac, and other ancient versions, and also the Fathers down to the fifth century, instead of *Θεός* God, have *ὁ ὡς* which. This makes good sense ; allows the Apostle to be consistent and connected in his discourse ; furnishes a good reason why the fathers never quoted it, in favor of Christ's divinity ; and attaches the term, *mystery* to the *gospel* as a system of faith, accordant with the representation given of it in other passages ; but which, in no instance, is applied to the supposed doctrine of the incarnation.†

* See Porter's defence of Unitarianism. Page 110.

† Sir Isaac Newton, in his two letters to Le Clerc, says respecting this passage, "Tertullian (*adversus Praxiam*) and Cyprian (*adversus Judeos*) industriously cite all the places, where *Christ* is called *God* : But have nothing of this. Alexander of Alexandria, Athanasius, the Bishops of the council of Sardica, Epiphanius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyssen, Chrysostom, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Alexandria ; and amongst the Latins, Hilary, Lucifer, Jerome, Ambrose, Austin, Phoebeadius, Victorinus, Afer, Faustinus Diaconus, Pope Leo the Great, Arnobius Junior, Cerealis, Vigilius Tapsensis, Fulgentius, wrote all of them in the fourth and fifth centuries for the Deity of the Son, and incarnation of God ; and some of them largely and in several tracts ; and yet I cannot find, that they ever allége this text to prove it. In all the times of the hot and lasting Arian controversy, it never came into play : Though now that these disputes are over, they, that read, "God was manifested in the flesh," think it one of the most obvious and pertinent texts for the

The passage, with the above correction, and properly translated, stands thus. *Indeed openly proclaimed to all ranks and descriptions is the sublime mystery of godliness, which has been made known to mortal man, substantiated by miraculous attestations, revealed to inspired messengers, preached to the nations, credited by the world, embraced with joyful exultation.*

As this varies so much from the common version, it will perhaps be expected by the learned (for to them only can the appeal be made) that the reasons of it should be exhibited. They are these. Καὶ no one will dispute, very often signifies *indeed*. Ομολογούμεως, *openly proclaimed to all ranks and descriptions*. It is well known, that the word *mystery*, was borrowed, by the sacred writers, from the heathen, and applied to the gospel, as a system of doctrines and morality, which is excellent, not discoverable by reason, and was just published to the world. The heathen mysteries were twofold. One order consisted in doctrines wrapped up in fable and metaphor, made known only to a few, and kept secret from the inferior grades of society. This class of doctrines was styled *σχ ομολογούμενα*, and considered too sublime for the common multitude. Another order of doctrines were those, which accorded with the prejudices of the vulgar, were delivered in plain common language, and made known to every one, who wished to be initiated. This class was styled *ομολογούμενα*. We consider the Apostle as using the adverb, in reference to this latter distinction, to denote that the gospel system was not confined to a few men of superior intelligence, but published alike to all orders and descriptions.

Μεγα sublime. By this he means to affirm, that although the gospel system is proclaimed to the multitude, as well as to others, it does not accord with vulgar prejudices and errors, but is a rational, refined, and heavenly system of moral doctrine, much better entitled to the epi-

business. The churches therefore of those ages were absolute strangers to this reading. For on the contrary, their writers, as often as they have occasion to cite the reading then in use, discover that it was *δ*." Vid. Chris. in loc.

thet *exalted*, or *sublime*, than the first order of heathen mysteries.

Εν σαρκί *to mortal man*. The preposition, *en* being a sign of the dative case, has all, or nearly all, those significations of which a dative case will admit. Very frequent examples occur where it signifies *to*, *by*, *with*; the version given of it above.

The word *σαρκί* may, by a very common figure of speech, be a part for the whole. It is frequently thus used by the sacred writers. We suppose, the Apostle has reference to the heathen mysteries, as stated above; and would intimate, that, as the vulgar never made discovery of the high doctrines in the first class of heathen mysteries, so neither did the reason of man ever make discovery of the sublime doctrines, taught in the christian system. He would intimate by the degrading term *σαρκί* that the human capacity is very limited, and that the life of man is so short, as not to allow him any great progress in moral knowledge. Indeed, that man is wholly inadequate to the invention of such a sublime system of moral truth, as that contained in the gospel; and, therefore, that it must have been communicated to him from above.

Εδικαιώθη εν πνεύματι *substantiated by miraculous attestations*. *Εδικαιώθη* signifies to *render just*, or to *make good a cause*; and *πνεύματι*, commonly rendered *spirit*, is very often used for those miraculous powers, which were conferred on Christ and the Apostles, in support of the truth and inspiration of the doctrines, which they delivered.—Even our opponents will not deny this, if they are allowed to say, that it is done by a figure of speech, which puts the effect for the cause.

Ωφθαλμοῖς ἀποκαλύφθη *revealed to inspired messengers*. The latter term, it is well known, is by no means appropriated to the spirits of higher order only; but signifies any messenger. Peculiarly is the term applicable to inspired prophets and Apostles, who were sent by God to make known his truth to mankind. The former term signifies, in the passive voice, *to have any thing appear*, *to be manifested* to our sight or understanding. To have the gos-

pel system, or mystery, shown unto us, is to have it *revealed* unto us.

Εἰς τοὺς ἔθνη. This is a very common use of the term, especially by the apostles and prophets.

Ἀναληφθῆναι ἐν δόξῃ *embraced with joyful exultation*. By no other authority, than the assumed one of accommodating to their own notions of the supposed doctrine of the incarnation, have our translators rendered this clause *received up into glory*. The verb ἀναλαμβάνω, no more signifies to receive *up*, than it does to receive *down*. It denotes merely the act of taking, or receiving, ; and, when the sense requires it, taking *with*, or *to one's self*. Now to take, or receive the gospel system, is to embrace and adopt it as truth.

The phrase ἐν δόξῃ, without the article, is used more than a dozen times in the New Testament ; and, neither with nor without the article, is it ever rendered, by our translators, *into glory* ; nor indeed can it be thus rendered. The preposition, for *into*, is *eis*. We have never seen an example, in which *eis* has, necessarily, this signification.

The gospel system is styled, Col. i. 27. *a glorious mystery*. To take or receive it ἐν δόξῃ, *with glory*, is to consider it in this light ; to glory and exult in it, as highly valuable and joyous.

Thus it appears that this passage, resorted to with so much confidence by great and small, says nothing concerning an incomprehensible incarnation of God in the person of Christ.

ANOTHER passage, said to confirm the doctrine of two natures, is, *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication ; and they shall look upon ME, whom they have pierced.** This is the language of Jehovah, and proves, say our opponents, that he was to have a nature, in which he should be pierced on the cross.

But that there is some mistake in the reading, is evident upon the slightest inspection of the whole passage,

* Zech. xii. 10.

The pronoun is immediately changed, from the first, to the third person; and yet the subject of discourse is manifestly the same. "And they shall look upon ME, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for HIM, as one mourneth for his only son, and they shall be in bitterness for *him* as one is in bitterness for his first born." Jehovah is speaking of Christ; and the *me*, whether designed or undesigned, is evidently a mistake for *him*. Accordingly, the evangelist, John, quotes this passage thus: *They shall look on HIM whom they pierced.** This was the reading in his day, and is doubtless the true one. We have no proof therefore, of the doctrine of two natures as yet.

It is further urged to this point, *Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is God with us.†*

According to our translators, the miraculous birth of Christ, and calling his name Jesus, denoting that he should save God's people, "was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin" &c. The prophesy, here quoted, is found in Isaiah.‡ It appears from the context, that Resin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, had joined their forces, and determined to destroy Jerusalem. The Lord sent Isaiah to comfort Ahaz, and dismiss his fears, by informing him, that their counsel should not stand. Ahaz is called upon to ask of God a sign, in testimony of this fact. He refuses. Then the prophet says; "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel;—before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land, that thou abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings." Accordingly, the propheticess of that time conceived and bear a son, which was the predicted sign, that the Lord was to give; and who, in conformity to the prediction, did not arrive to the knowledge of good and evil before Resin and Pekah were

* John, xix. 37.—† Mat. i. 23.—‡ Isaiah, vii. 14.

both destroyed. It is hence evident, that the prediction respecting a son, whose name was to be called Immanuel, was to be fulfilled at that time, even during the life of Ahaz ; and was to be a sign to him of the salvation, which the Lord was soon to accomplish, in the destruction of the two kings, who had conspired against Jerusalem.

Why, then, does the inspired evangelist apply it, as a prediction concerning Christ ?

In our opinion, he does not apply it in this manner. Instead of saying *all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which, was spoken of the Lord by the prophet*, the true translation is, *In all this, what the Lord had spoken by the prophet was verified*. All, that the evangelist intended to say, is, that the extraordinary event, of the miraculous conception of Jesus, corresponds or agrees with the sign, which God gave to Ahaz. In that case, a virgin was to conceive a Son. So also it is in this. In that case, God was to be with the Jews his people, according to the signification of the name of the virgin's Son, *Immanuel*, which denoted that salvation had come to them. So, also, the name of this Son of the virgin Mary is called, *Jesus*, to denote that salvation is about to be afforded to God's people.

This is evidently the true idea : For the evangelist quotes this prophecy of Isaiah, in reference to Christ's birth of a virgin, and his name being called *Jesus* at the command of the angel. Had he intended to say, that the birth and name of Christ was in fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction, the name would undoubtedly have been that, which the prediction pointed out. The prediction says, that his name shall be called *Immanuel*. The angel says that his name shall be called *Jesus*. *Immanuel* and *Jesus* surely are not the same name. How then is calling the child by the name *Jesus*, a fulfilment of the prediction, that his name shall be called Immanuel ? If it be considered a prediction concerning a name, calling the child by a name entirely different, certainly is not a fulfilment of the prediction. Jesus is no name of God, but a name of a man. It was a very common name with the Jews ;

and Joshua is called Jesus, by Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Nor is Christ once called Immanuel in scripture. It is not a name, which was ever given to him by any one. The prediction, therefore, did not respect Christ. It had reference only to the child, born in the days of Ahaz, and is quoted by the Evangelist upon the principle we have stated. Thus this famous passage, forever adduced to prove the doctrine of two natures in Christ, proves when faithfully examined, upon what superficial grounds our opponents are ready to conclude Jesus to be both God and man.*

WITH as little propriety is the following urged:—*Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts.*† The fellow of the Lord of Hosts, it is said, can be no other than his equal, one of the persons in the Trinity; and as Jesus Christ is manifestly the person referred to, against whom the wicked, God's sword, awaked, he must be both *God and man, a being of two natures in one person.*

But this interpretation of the passage proves too much. For if, by fellow, be meant strict equality, then it proves that there are two Lords of Hosts, the one of whom is equal to the other. *Fellow* never signifies *identity of being*; but is a term, which implies another being, distinct from itself, to which it is allied only by a resemblance, or similarity of properties. The advocates for the supreme Deity of Christ may be challenged to produce an instance, within the compass of language, where the word is used to signify identity of being, or will admit of this idea.

And will it be contended that there are more Gods than one? It is a fundamental article in their creed, as well as in ours, that *there is one only*. Neither will the doctrine of the Trinity aid them here; for the word, *fellow*, is never used to signify equality of persons in the

* The translation we have given above, is taken from the orthodox Dr. Campbell, a translator and critic of the first eminence. Any one, who will consult him on the subject, will see at once, that our translators have need of frequent correction in their common phrase, *all this was done that it might be fulfilled, &c.*—† Zech. xiii. 7.

same being, any more than equality of beings in the same person. There is a much more consistent and intelligible construction of this passage. It is well known, that the Hebrew word, rendered *fellow*, signifies also a *neighbor*, one near to another. The Syriac version has it *amicum meum, my friend*. Let it have this version here, and it will not only accord with the general representation of scripture concerning Christ, but with the other appellations given him in the passage, to wit, Jehovah's *shepherd* and the *man*. This version is also sanctioned by the Septuagint ; ἀνδρα πολιτην με *the man my citizen*.

THE following passages are said plainly to indicate, that Christ had two natures. "Of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power."* "Knowing that God had sworn, with an oath to him, that, of the fruit of his loins, he would raise up Christ, according to the flesh, to sit upon his throne."† "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came."‡ Here it is to be observed, that Christ is said to be of the seed of David and of the Jews *as to the flesh* ; which, say our opponents evidently implies, that *he has another nature*, which is not of the seed of David.

But does this prove that the other nature is really divine ? The Arians and others say, that, by the *flesh*, is meant Christ's *body* only ; and that the other nature is his *preexistent spirit*, which was not of the seed of the Jews, but was created before all worlds. And, in proof of their interpretation, they bring this text, "*Wherefore when he (the Son) cometh into the world, he saith sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not ; but a BODY hast thou prepared me.*"§ If these passages really indicate another and higher nature in Christ, it does not appear that it is any thing more, than a *preexistent spirit* according to the Arian hypothesis.

But the very same phrase is often used in application to those, who are known to possess but one nature. Paul makes use of this language in application to the Jews, in the context of that very passage, where he uses it con-

* Rom. i. 3. —† Acts, ii. 10. —‡ Rom. ix. 5. —§ Heb. x. 5.

cerning Christ. *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh.** Does this language suggest, that Paul had *another and higher nature*, in which the Jews were not his brethren, his kinsmen ? Or that they had *another nature above him*, considered as a human being only ? If not ; if he meant nothing more, than that the Jews, though not christians as he was, were his natural brethren and kinsmen, as being of the same nation or family descent with him, where is the propriety of considering the very same phrase, *κατα σαρκα*, applied to Christ in the second verse below, to mean something more ? To indicate a higher nature, than what was common to his countrymen ? In the case of Paul, it denotes, simply, that he was a Jew or of the Jewish nation, although he had embraced the christian faith, and was then an Apostle of God. It means the same, when applied to Christ. It means that he was a Jew, or of the Jewish nation, although he is now exalted to be God, Lord, or Governor over all, both Jews and Gentiles ; Angels, principalities and powers being made subject unto him. This is the invariable meaning of the phrase, *κατα σαρκα*, *as to the flesh, after the flesh, as concerning the flesh, pertaining to the flesh*, whenever applied to Christ. For, surely, when we read of *Abraham as pertaining to the flesh*,† and of *Israel after the flesh*‡ we are not to conclude, that Abraham and Israel possessed two natures, were both human and divine.

ANOTHER passage of scripture, to this point, is, *Hereby perceive we the love of God; because he laid down his life for us.*§ It is said, that God is here represented, as having died for mankind. But seeing divinity itself cannot suffer, the man Christ Jesus, who laid down his life for us, must be a being of two natures.

On this let the following things be observed.

I. The love of God is often said to be expressed towards mankind, by giving his Son to die for them. It is asserted in the succeeding chapter of this same epistle. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because*

* Rom. ix. 3.—† Rom. iv. 1.—‡ I Cor. x. 18.—§ I John iii. 16.

that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* Now, were there nothing in the passage itself, by which we could determine the matter, it would be natural to conclude, that the love of God consisted in giving up his Son, and that the *he*, who is said to have laid down his life for us, must refer to Jesus Christ, the Son given.

2. The words, *of God*, are not in the original. They are the comment of our translators. All, that the Apostle thought proper to say, is, *Hereby perceive we love, because he laid down his life for us*. Now who was it that laid down his life for us ? Was it God ? or one sent by God ? The noted Dr. Haweis, in his version of the New Testament, thus renders the passage. *Hereby perceive we love, because Jesus Christ laid down his life for us*.

3. Though we were to acknowledge, that the words, *of God*, are properly supplied, as pointing out whose love is intended, yet the relative is not *eros this person*, referring to God, the immediate antecedent, but *eros that other*, referring to a remote antecedent : Which, as appears from verse 8, is *the Son of God*. This passage affords therefore no support to the doctrine of two natures.

FEED the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.† That, from John, just considered, together with the remarks made upon it, may be viewed an illustration of the true sense of this passage. If the reading, in our present copy, be thought genuine, then the verb *κατεποιουσατο* *he purchased*, refers to the Lord Jesus, verse 24, who laid down his life for us, and by whose blood only, the scriptures represent the church of God to have been purchased. But it is well known, that a multitude of the best ancient manuscripts and versions read the church of the Lord, instead of the church of God.‡

* I John iv. 9, 10. —† Acts xx. 28.

‡ It is read *feed the church of the Lord* in the following Manuscripts, Versions and Fathers : The Alexandrine, Ephrem, Cambridge, Codex, Bodlejanus and other MSS. The Coptic, Armenian, and, in the margin, the Syriac Versions. The Apostolical constitutions. Irenæus, Didymus, Eusebius, Athanasius, Crisostom, Ammonius, Jerome, Augustin and others. Vid. Griesback in loco.

The most ancient Syriac renders it *the church of Christ*. So that this scripture affords no proof of the strange doctrine of two natures.

FINALLY. In proof of the doctrine, that Christ had a divine and human nature, it is very common to urge the following passage. *For verily he took not on him the nature of Angels ; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.**

To this passage the Arians have as good a claim, as the advocates for the divinity of Christ. The Apostle does not say whether the personage, who took not on him the nature of angels but the seed of Abraham, were the supposed second person in the Trinity, or whether he were the supposed preexistent, superangelic spirit. Nor indeed does he speak at all of Christ's taking upon him another and additional nature. This is only the comment of our translators. They themselves inform the English reader, that the words, printed in italics, and which we shall include in brackets, are not in the original. "For verily he took not on [him the nature of] angels but he took on [him] the seed of Abraham."

The passage is much more correctly and judiciously translated, by Dr. Mc. Knight, thus. *Moreover, by no means doth he take hold of angels ; but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold.* Of which the Dr. gives this comment. "Moreover, by no means doth he take hold of the angels who sinned to save them ; but of those who are the seed of Abraham by faith, he taketh hold, to deliver them from death, and to conduct them to heaven." In support of this translation and comment, he observes in his note ; "In this translation I have followed the Vulgate. *Nusquam enim angelos apprehendit ; sed semen Abrahamæ apprehendit.* The word *επιλαμβάνεται* signifies the taking hold of a thing with one's hand, in order to support or carry it away. Accordingly it is so translated in the margin of our bible, and in Luke, ix. 47—xx. 20, 26."

* Heb. ii. 16.

Thus we have considered the passages, generally adduced by our opponents, as directly intimating and confirming their doctrine of two infinitely diverse natures in Christ. None of which, it is plain, suggest any such idea. But were this doctrine true, fundamental, and, as our opponents affirm, necessary to be believed in order to salvation, it certainly must have been taught in the very plainest manner. It would have been "*A GOLDEN THREAD*," extending through the sacred volume so conspicuous, that the wayfaring man, though a fool, could not fail to perceive it. The most important doctrines are the most frequently taught. They are also illustrated in the clearest manner. Concerning the unity of God, no one entertains a single doubt. It is taught on almost every page, and in the most definite language. But our opponents have never pretended to adduce one single passage, which, in simple terms, affirms that Christ is a being composed of two natures, human and divine. Not a single passage have they ever been able to produce, which declares, that Christ spake *this* of his human nature, *that* of his divine nature, and *the other* in his mediatorial capacity. Though this mode of speaking be constantly in their mouths, when they undertake to support their cause, yet such a mode of speaking is not once to be found in the compass of inspiration. Neither Prophet, nor Apostle, nor the Lord Jesus, nor any Bible Saint, has ever used such language.

But how could this be, if the doctrine of two natures were really true, and the belief of it so fundamental, as our opponents pretend? Is it credible, that the Holy Ghost would have left this most interesting and all important doctrine to be *inferred* only from certain expressions, compared together? Would this great doctrine have been so under cover as to be seen only as it arises, by *implication*, from two other doctrines, which cannot otherwise be reconciled? to wit, that he is affirmed to be *God* in one place, and *man* in another? It is infinitely irrational to suppose it. We certainly should have had it taught in such language, as its defenders, in all ages since its invention, have used. We should have been told

plainly, and in so many words, that *Christ is a being of two natures*; that *he has both a divine and a human nature*; that *he is, however, not two beings or two persons, but one being or one person only*; that *he is not a human person, but a divine person with a human impersonal nature*; and that *he spake sometimes with reference to his human nature, and sometimes with reference to his divinity, and sometimes with reference to neither, but to his compound character as Mediator*. Were such language as this in the bible, our opponents would have some better plea for their doctrine. They might then talk of *mystery*, in their sense of the term, as those who have authority. But, as the case now stands, it is far otherwise. Their proof in favor of the supreme and independent Deity of Christ, and the passages, alleged to establish the doctrine of two natures, if the considerations we have urged in reply be of any weight, entirely fail. And, the inspired scriptures containing no such language, as is used at the present day, concerning Christ, by the advocates of the doctrine of two natures in one divine person, we are compelled to conclude, that this doctrine is an invention of men having no other authority than tradition from the fathers.

WE cannot but offer to the reader an extract from Emlyn on the pretence of Trinitarians, that Christ means only his *human nature*, when he makes such declarations as these, *I can do nothing of myself: Of that day knoweth no man, no not the Angels in heaven, neither the Son but the father only*.

“Why should men devise or imagine for him such a strange, and seemingly deceitful way of speaking, from no ground nor necessity, than that of upholding their own precarious opinion? But I have several remarks to make upon this common answer.”

“1. That which, in the first place, I have to object against it, is that our blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, if *himself* was the supreme God in any nature of his own, could not have said such things, as I conceive, in any consistency with truth or sincerity (which he always maintained strictly.) He would not say himself *could not do*, or *did*

not know the thing, which, all this while, *himself could do and did know* very well ; as to be sure, if he was the supreme God, he could and did. For this were to make him say what is most false, and to *equivocate* in the most deceitful manner. For, though we should suppose he consisted of two infinitely different natures, and so had two capacities of knowledge, &c. yet since himself includes them both, it follows, that the denying a thing of himself in absolute terms, without any limitation in the words or other obvious circumstances, does plainly imply a denial of its belonging to any part of his person, or any nature in it. For, though we may *affirm* a thing of a person, which belongs *only* to a part of him ; as I may properly say a man is wounded or hurt, though it be only in one member, suppose an arm ; yet I cannot justly *deny* a thing of him which belongs only to one part, because it belongs not to another ; as I cannot say a man is not wounded because, though one arm be shot or wounded, yet the other is whole."

"For instance, I have two organs of sight, *two eyes*. Now suppose I converse with a man, with one eye shut and the other open ; if being asked whether I saw him, I should dare to say I saw him not (without any limitation) meaning to myself ~~that~~ I saw him not with the eye which was shut, though still I saw him well enough with the eye which was open ; I fear I should bear the reproach of a *liar* and *deceiver* ; notwithstanding such a mental reservation as some would attribute to the *Holy Jesus*.— That you may see that this is fair reasoning, hear how some of the other side own it, when out of the heat of this controversy. See Dr. Stillingfleet's sermon on Matt. x. 16. speaking of the equivocations of Popish Priests, whose common answer, when examined about what they have known by confession, is, that they *know it not* ; which they think to vindicate from the charge of lying, by saying that, *in confession, the Priest knows matters as God, not as man ; and therefore he denies to know them, meaning it as man*. But says the Doctor, 'this is absurd ; because, to say he does not know, is as much as to say, *he doth not any way know*.' Now if this be a good answer

against the *Papists* (as no doubt it is) then sure it is so in the present case. Therefore, when Christ says he knows not the day of judgment, it is as much as to say he does not *any way* know it; and consequently, it is a vain shift to say, it was *as man only*,"

3. "Moreover, that interpretation must needs be unjust which, if admitted, will make all, even the most plain speech, *uncertain and utterly insignificant*; as this interpretation of Christ's words would do. For, as I ask the patrons of this opinion in what words Jesus Christ could *in brief* have denied himself to be God most high, more plainly and fully than in these, in which he says, he knew not all things as the Father did, nor could do all things, &c. So I would fain have them shew me what words of that nature he could have used, which, the *same way* of interpretation as they here use, will not evade and make insignificant. For, had he said or sworn in plain words thus, *I tell you I am not the supreme God, and none but my Father has that glory*; they would, upon the *same reason*, still have said, this was to be understood of him *as man only*. So that no words, professing himself *not to be God*, could be proof of this, if this way of interpretation be allowed."

4. "Again, this way of interpretation, which the advocates of the opinion I oppose are necessitated to for upholding their cause, does plainly overthrow it again, and may be turned against themselves. For if it be just and true to deny of Christ absolutely what belongs to him in one nature, because there is another nature in which it belongs not to him, then, since to be the chief God belongs to him (according to our adversaries) only in *one nature*, and not in respect of the other or human nature, it follows that it may justly be said *Jesus Christ is not God, nor to be worshipped or trusted as such*, without adding any limitation or restriction any more than our Lord does in the places mentioned. What would they say to one, who should preach, that *Jesus is not God*? that *he cannot do all things*? that *he is not equal to the Father*? Would they not conclude, that he is *a denier of the Deity of Christ*? else he never would speak so unguardedly,

Upon the same account, when Jesus Christ himself says, that he *cannot do all things of himself, nor knows all things*, and makes no reserves in his words, we may conclude he also denies his being supreme God ; else, if it be a just way of speaking in him, it cannot be unjust in us to imitate him, by denying him, indefinitely, to be what, in any one nature, he is not ; i. e. *that he is not God*, without adding any thing more. After this way of speaking, which they attribute to Christ, one may say, I believe that Jesus Christ was not conceived of the Holy Ghost, or born of the Virgin Mary ; I believe that he was never crucified under Pontius Pilate, nor was dead or buried ; that he never *rose* nor *ascended*, nor will *return* ; for his divine nature (which it is pretended he had) was not capable of those things. And, since they say the *personality is divine* here seems more warrant to be bolder in denying indefinitely, of the person, what belongs not to the divine nature, whose the *personality* is, than in so denying, of the person, what only belongs not to the human nature."

5, " Finally, it weighs something with me, in opposition to this way of interpretation, that the Evangelists never take any occasion (when they had so many) to subjoin any caution against taking Christ's words in their obvious sense, saying, *he spake this of his human nature*, when he says *he did not know the hour, that he could of his own self do nothing*, &c.—But here is not one caution given, though we find there often was about less matters. No doubt it was because they would have the thing understood as it fairly lies ; not thinking of any such secret reserve in Christ, *of a divine nature in his person, to be tacitly excepted*, when he had denied such perfections of his person indefinitely."

HERE we might desist from treading over the ground of our opponents. But, lest it be thought they have not as yet, had a full and ample hearing, we proceed to give audience to certain *miscellaneous testimonies*, adduced in support of the doctrine of Christ's supreme deity.

SECTION XI.

NEITHER *let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.** The argument is this. The Apostle refers to a remarkable occurrence, when Israel was in the land of Edom. They tempted God, and were destroyed by serpents. The Apostle, it is said, considers tempting Christ to be tempting that God, who was tempted, by the Israelites. Wherefore Christ must be the God of Israel,

THE premises we have no objection to acknowledge ; but the conclusion we deny. The Israelites tempted God, by tempting Moses, his messenger. But does it hence follow, that Moses was the God of Israel ? God considers that, which is done to his commissioned servants, as done to himself. It is recorded, *And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.†* This murmuring against Moses and Aaron was, in effect, murmuring against God, who commissioned them. Accordingly, it is said so to be. *The Lord heareth your murmurings, which ye murmur against him : And what are we ? Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord.‡* To tempt Christ, therefore, is to do as the Israelites did, in murmuring against Moses and Aaron. It is tempting God, by whom he is commissioned.

This is no new or strange doctrine. Nor has it become obsolete. It is expressly taught us by Christ himself. “ He, that despiseth you, despiseth me ; and he, that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me,”§ Pray, would it be good logic to infer, because despising the Apostles is despising Christ, the Apostles are Christ ? or, because despising Christ is despising him who sent him, that Christ is God, the Father ? or, because the lying of Annanias and Sapphira, to the inspired Peter, was lying

* I Cor. x. 9.—† Exod. xvi. 2. 3.—‡ Exod. xvi. 8.—§ Luke, x. 16.

unto the Holy Ghost, therefore Peter is the Holy Ghost ? Yet this is exactly the conclusion of the advocates for the supreme divinity of Christ, from the passage before us, and indeed from a multitude of others.*

I AM Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is and which was, and which is, to come, the Almighty.† With no propriety is this distinct and separate declaration considered, by our opponents, as relating to Jesus Christ. They are undoubtedly the words of the Angel, speaking in the name of that God, who, in verse 1, is said to have given this revelation to Jesus Christ, to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass, and, in compliance with which duty, Jesus Christ is said to have sent and signified them, by his Angel, unto his servant John. Of this we are certain ; for the supreme God is distinguished in verse 4, from Jesus Christ by the title *who is and was and is to come*. And these words are spoken in the name of *the supreme God*, to afford assurance to all men that his purposes are unchangeable, and that he has power to accomplish the predictions declared in this revelation. In confirmation of this, are also the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and no less than seventeen other MSS noted by Wetstein ; the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic and Coptic versions ; a number of the Fathers ; and some respectable editions of the Greek Testament ; ‡ who add *Θεος God*, after Lord, thus ; *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending saith the Lord God*, &c.

The title, *Alpha and Omega*, is never given to Jesus Christ. The first part of verse 11, which runs thus in our present copy, "*I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last and*" is well known to be an interpolation. These words are wanting in the most respectable and most ancient manuscripts, in the Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, Arme-

* The Alexandrian manuscripts and the Ethiopic version read *Θεος* instead of *Χριστος*, which reading Wakefield follows. The Arminian, Syriac, and Coptic and some of the Fathers read *Κυριος*. If either of these be the true reading, all shadow of argument from this passage concerning Christ vanishes at once.

† Rev. i. 8. — ‡ Wetstein and Griesback in loco.

nian, and Ethiopic Versions ; are rejected by Dr. Mill ; and Griesback and others have omitted them in their editions.*

And, though Jesus Christ is, in several instances, represented as saying *I am the first and the last*, yet we are certain, that he does not use this style to denote his eternity, for he himself explains what is to be understood by it ; to wit, that he is first as to his resurrection, and the last as to his ignominious death. "*I am the first and the last.*" *I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore : Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death.*† Again.—*These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive ;*‡ On the cross he was the *last*, the very *offscouring of all things*, crucified as though he were a *malefactor*. In his resurrection he is exalted far above all principality and power and every name that is named, and is therefore *first* of all. This is the interpretation which our Lord himself gives of his being the *first* and the *last* ; and no argument can arise in favor of his being the supreme God, because the latter uses these expressions in a different sense.

AGAIN.—"*If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also ; and henceforth ye know him and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. And Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me Philip ? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ; and how sayest thou then shew us the Father.*"||

But is this passage really *proof*, that the disciples saw the *King eternal, immortal and invisible* ? Was the Lord Jesus in his person God the Father ? Or, are we to acknowledge, that he who is styled *the Truth*, contradicts here, what he had previously asserted ?§ Strange that men should choose the sound, rather than the sense. What mean these scriptures ? "The only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."¶ "We know that the Son of God has come, and given us an un-

* Wetstein and Griesback. —† Rev. i. 17, 18. —‡ Chap. ii. 8. —|| John xiv. 7—9. —§ John v. 37 and vi. 46. —¶ Chap. i. 18.

derstanding that we may know Him that is true."* Yea, why should we quote a passage of peculiar phraseology and pay no attention to the explanation of it, which our Lord proceeded immediately to render? "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake."† Has any one studied the scriptures with so little attention, as not to know the meaning of the representation of *one dwelling in another*? When the apostle John says "He that keepeth his (God's) commandments, dwelleth in him, and he (God) in him,"‡ does he mean to assert the divinity of the obedient? Did he mean to assert this, when he says; "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit." "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."§ On these passages Dr. Mc. Knight very judiciously observes, that "the expressions of *dwelling in God, and God's dwelling in him*, must be understood differently according to the characters of the persons to whom they are applied. If spoken of teachers, their meaning is, that these teachers are faithful to God in teaching the true doctrines of the gospel and are assisted and beloved of God. But if spoken of private persons, they mean one's abiding in the belief of the doctrines and in the practice of the precepts of the gospel and his enjoying the love of God." Christ was the great Teacher sent from God. He spake the words and did the works, which God commanded him to speak and gave him to perform. By so doing, he became an exhibition of God. Those that beheld him, saw *the wisdom of God and the power of God*, manifested in the doctrines which he delivered and the miracles which he wrought. This was all that Philip saw. And this is what Christ explains himself to mean, by his declaration, that he had seen the Father. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak

* John v. 20. —† John xiv. 10, 11. —‡ John iii. 24. —§ John i. 4, 13, 15.

not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." God is seen only by his works; and these the disciples saw in Christ. Hence he proceeds to tell them, that if they believe on him they should do even greater works, than what he had exhibited, (which you will observe, were the evidence, on which they were to believe in him, and of course they were to believe in him only as one sent of God) when he should have gone to the Father, and received his exaltation to be the head over all things to the Church. *At that day, says he, ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.* Ye shall know that I am commissioned by the Father, and that ye are commissioned by me. You will then perform such works in my name, as I perform in my Father's name.

Let men compare spiritual things with spiritual, in the language which the Holy Ghost teacheth, and they will find that three fourths of the passages, which are adduced in proof of the supreme divinity of Christ, are striking and decisive declarations against the doctrine.

To proceed. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace; of the increase of his government, and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.**

That this passage really respects the Lord Jesus, we shall not here undertake to dispute; though there is no certainty, in our minds, that it has any such reference. Be this as it may, the passage is very far from asserting the supreme and independent divinity of Christ. For,

1. You will please to notice, that he is declared to be *a child born, a son given.* This is the description of his nature. This is what he actually IS.

* Isaiah, ix. 6—7.

2. The passage does not say, that the government *is* now upon his shoulder, but that it *shall be* ; which implies, that he is about to be raised to an authority, he does not now possess.

3. You will observe, the passage does not say, that *he* is the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, &c. but that *he shall be thus styled* ; he shall have these titles when the government shall be upon his shoulder.

4. If you ask, how *he*, who is a child born and a son given, shall rise to the eminence of having the government upon his shoulder, and the high titles mentioned ? the passage explains this matter, and says, *The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this* ; i. e. will see that these things be conferred upon him.

In fulfilment of this prediction, if it really respects Christ, the scriptures inform, that the zeal of the Lord of Hosts has actually performed all, that is here declared. *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ has put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the Church.* God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, Lord.† Him hath God exalted with his own right hand to be a Prince.‡ And given him a name above every name,||* Pray is the supreme and independent Deity of Christ to be inferred from the statement made in fulfilment of this prediction ? If not, as, no one will pretend, then why make this inference from the prediction itself ?

It is strange that this passage should be adduced, on every occasion, in proof of the Deity of Christ ; seeing it only predicts that *the child, the son* should be *elevated, by the power of the Lord of Hosts*, to the government of his people, and have *bestowed upon him* high and exalted titles.§

ANOTHER passage. *Which none of the princes of this world knew ; for, had they known it, they would not have*

* Eph. i. 22.—† Acts, ii. 36.—‡ Chap. v. 31.—|| Phil. ii. 9.

§ It may not be improper to remark here, that the passage is capable of a different translation. *And his name shall be called—a mighty God, the Father of everlasting age* ; i. e. of the christian dispensation, which is to continue to the end of the world. The noted Lowth, translates it as

crucified THE LORD OF GLORY.* Peter tells us plainly, how Christ came by his Lordship. "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both LORD and CHRIST." God *made* him *Lord* of all that glory, which he possesses. "This title however, it is worthy of observation, is somewhat different from that, which the same Apostle ascribes to *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*, to wit, the FATHER of glory;† the *source* and *fountain* of it.

FURTHER ; It is said, that we are bound to give the same honor, both in kind and degree, to the Son of God, which we give to the supreme Father. And the following passage is adduced, on every occasion, as a most decided and illustrious proof of the supreme divinity of Christ. "*The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father ; he that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him.*‡

We make the following remarks upon this plain and intelligible passage,

1. It is asserted, that the business of judgment is *committed* into the hands of the Son, by God the Father. This plainly implies, he is but a *delegated* Judge ; that the authority of judgment does not arise from the properties of his nature. But if he were God himself clothed with the inherent perfections of Deity, the business of judgment could no more be committed, or delegated to him, than to God the Father.

2. It is said to be committed into his hands, by God, the Father, for the purpose of his obtaining honor, or respect, from mankind. This plainly implies that the honor, which they are to bestow upon him, is to correspond

above, excepting that he uses the article *the* instead of *a* before mighty God. Further, it ought not to be omitted, that the seventy interpreters, according to the Vatican, have given a very different account of this passage. They make no mention of these titles, but render it thus : And his name shall be called *the messenger of the grand design* *μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος*. This translation is confirmed by the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.

* 1 Cor. ii. 8. —† Eph. i. 17. —‡ John, v. 22, 23.

with the delegated station of dignity in which he stands : Of course not that degree of honor, which is due to Him, who commissioned.

3. The *kind* of honor, to be paid, is particularly specified to be what is above suggested. "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father who sent him." We have, here, the principle plainly laid down. In all embassies, what is done to the ambassador is considered done to him, who sends. When Hanun treated the messengers of David with contempt, the King of Israel considered himself dishonored ; and immediately sent an army for Hanun's destruction. On the other hand, should the King of England send a plenipotentiary to this country, and he be treated with due respect, his Britanic Majesty would consider himself honored and respected by the American States. No principle can be more selfevident, than this stated by our Lord. It is a principle, however, which militates, pointedly against the construction of our opponents. It tells us, in one and the same breath, that the Son is not that illustrious Being who sends ; and that the honor paid to him, is to center ultimately in *the glory of God the Father*.*

* Philip. ii. 11.

SECTION XII.

WE proceed, now, to another argument, on which our opponents, of the present generation, make no inconsiderable dependence, in proof of their doctrine of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, and, of course, that Christ, who is the Son of the Father, must be supreme and independent. For those, who implicitly assent to Jones on the Trinity, will expect that some reply to his *powerful argument*, concerning the PLURALISMS applied to God in the Old Testament, should at least be *attempted*.

BE it known, then, to the unskilled in the dead languages—It is a fact, not to be controverted, that God is, very frequently, spoken of under names in the plural number; and plural verbs, pronouns and relatives, are often applied to him in the Hebrew. Thus it is said, *In the beginning the GODS created the heaven and the earth. Remember thy CREATORS in the days of thy youth: And the GODS said let US make man, &c. &c.* This extraordinary style, it is said, holds forth to man a plurality of persons in the Godhead, and substantiates the common doctrine of the blessed Trinity: For, to suppose otherwise, is to concede, that the sacred penmen have used language, which is careless of the true representation of God, and calculated to mislead the candid inquirer after truth. But how strange, that the Jews, to whom this language was addressed, should never, in any of their generations from Moses to Christ, be led astray by this manner of writing! Notwithstanding their propensity to idolatry, and numerous defections from the unity of God, they never thought of pleading the language of scripture as an excuse, nor did they ever dream, that it allowed a plurality of divine persons, as the objects of their supreme worship. From Moses to Christ, no Jew was ever found to be a Trinitarian. We know indeed what is pretended on this subject, and the distinctions, which are sug-

gested in their Talmuds, Targums, and Paraphrases ; and we have read something of the *δεύτερος Θεός* ; *second God* of Philo, as standing amidst the powers on the right and left : And we have heard Mamonides concerning *the mystery of divine unity*, not to be proclaimed in the vulgar ears : But no evidence have we ever seen, of this Trinitarianism of the Jew, excepting the modern garb, in which we find him clothed by the imagination of the Commentator, who takes it for granted, that the robes of antiquity comported with the present fashion.

Strange also, that the seventy interpreters, who were supposed to understand Hebrew well enough to turn it into Greek, should be so silent concerning these important pluralisms, and deprive the unfortunate Jews, scattered among the nations, of the invaluable and fundamental doctrine ! Still more strange, that the Lord of glory, himself, and his inspired Apostles should agree wholly to omit these interesting pluralisms, even when they quote passages which contain them : Pluralisms so indicative of the true God, and so descriptive of the essential mode of his existence ! Thereby wresting an important weapon from the hand of those, who *contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints* ; and thus allowing the adversary to gain an advantage over them !

Strange, strange indeed ! that our translators, who were all zealous Trinitarians, should also conspire to desert the glorious cause, and carefully keep from the eye of the English reader, the interesting pluralisms attending the name of their God ! They have, indeed, in a few instances, suffered the secret to *leak out*, through the medium of a small pronoun, such as *let US make man*, and who will go for US ? But this is, by no means, sufficient to enlighten the eyes into a just and proper understanding of the GREAT AFFAIR. This is indeed *MYSTERIOUS*. We will venture, however, to explain.

The truth of the matter is, These pluralisms are an *idiom* of the Hebrew language.*

* The learned and Trinitarian Van Mastricht, in his system of Theology, where he adduces the arguments in favor of the Trinitarian scheme, very candidly observes : *Addi poterant, si non pro argumento apodic.*

1. The very same mode of expression is used concerning matters *purely singular*. *Elohim* the plural name of God, is applied to the image Dagon, the Deity of the Philistines. "Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon, their God (*Elohim*, their Gods) and they said our God (*Elohim* our Gods) hath delivered Sampson, our enemy, into our hand.*" The same is also applied, by God himself, to Moses. "And he (Aaron) shall be thy spokesman unto the people—and thou shalt be to him instead of God (*Elohim*, Gods.)†" "And the Lord said unto Moses, See I have made thee a God (*Elohim* Gods) to Pharaoh and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet."‡ Another name of God, in the plural number, is applied to Pharaoh, king of Egypt. "And it came to pass after these things that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord (*Adonim* their lords) the king of Egypt.§ The same plural style is applied to the husbandman. "The ox knoweth his owner (Hebrew, owners) and the ass his master's crib."¶ The brethren of Joseph, in their report concerning their treatment, by the prime minister of Egypt, give him the same plural style, and one of the names of the supreme God. "The man who is Lord (*Adonim* Lords or Gods) of the land spake roughly unto us."—"And the man, the lord (*Adonim* the Lords) of the country, said unto us hereby shall I know, &c."|| It is useless to adduce more instances, for the Old Testament abounds with them. From the examples above and a multitude of others, it is evidently according to the structure of the Hebrew language, to ap-

sico, saltem *dialeſico*, illa loca quibus plurali *Elohim* attributa vel nominalia, vel verbalia singularis *numeri* socianter Gen. i. 1. &c. Quamvis istud non paucis *exceptionibus* ac difficultatibus sit expositum. Cum. 1. eadem structura, etiam de rebus *pure singularibus* usurpetur, dedecastris Jud. xvi. 23, 24. de uno homine Exod. iv. 16. Cum. 2. de etiam una persona divinitatis Psal. xlv. 8. Cum. 3. vi syntaxcos non minus recte tres essentia, quam tres personae, ex ea confici possint. Cum. 4. ille loquendi modus, a linguae genio non prorsus abhoreat, ut patet in Exod. xxi. 29. Jes. i. 3. in Gen. xl. 1. and 42, 33. quod nomen Deo etiam competit, a quo Deut. x. 17. dicitur. Conf. Mal. i. 6. Unde Calvinus in concertationibus cum Antitrinitaribus, hoc argumenti genus proponendum duxit.

* Judg. xvi. 23.—† Exod. iv. 16.—‡ Chap. vii. 1.—|| Gen. xl. 1.—§ Isaiah i. 3.—¶ Gen. xlii. 30, 33.

ply plural verbs, nouns and pronouns, to a person or thing which is purely singular. There is no peculiarity in the application of such pluralisms to God. They are very frequently applied also to other beings and other things. We may, therefore, just as well conclude, from these pluralisms, that Joseph, or Moses, or Pharaoh, was a being of a plurality of real and distinct persons, as to make this conclusion concerning God, because the plural style is applied to him.

2. This language is even applied to God the *Father*, whom Trinitarians consider to be the *first person* in the Trinity. Yea, it is applied to him as *distinguished from the Son*, whom they hold to be the *second person*. "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God (Elohim thy *Gods*) hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."*†

3. Upon principles of syntax, or the construction of language, this mode of speaking as fully proves plurality of existences or beings, as plurality of persons.

This mode of speaking is, by no means peculiar to the Old Testament. We find the same in the new. Our Lord Jesus Christ speaks of himself in the plural number. "Verily, verily I say unto thee, WE speak that WE do know, and testify that WE have seen, and ye receive not OUR witness."‡ Paul, also, speaks often in the same manner. An instance occurs in his second letter to the Corinthians. "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you: But I beseech you that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of US as if WE walked according to the flesh. For though WE walk in

* Psalm, xlv. 7.

† Perhaps it will not be thought improper (for the sake of information) to ask some learned Divine among our opponents, who has been accustomed to consider the argument of Jones to be irrefragable, Whether the Father, the first person in the Trinity, be not subdivided into a number of distinct personalities? and, if so, whether it would not be an *improvement* in Theological science, to speak of God as a Trinity of Trinities?

‡ John, iii. 11.

the flesh, WE do not war after the flesh.—For the weapons of OUR warfare are not carnal—WE dare not make OURSELVES of the number, or compare OURSELVES with some that commend themselves.”*

Calvin, treating upon Gen. iii. 22, *And the Lord God said behold the man is become as one of US*, &c. says, “Although some Christians deduce from this passage the doctrine of three persons in Deity, the argument, in my apprehension, is not substantial.”† On this subject Christie judiciously remarks, “It is no uncommon thing in any language, either ancient or modern, for single persons to speak in the plural; but it was never yet heard of in any age of the world, that *more persons than one* spoke in the singular.‡ Let our opponents, therefore, adopt the wisdom of the illustrious reformer, and boast on more of the argument, furnished by the pluralisms applied to God in the Old Testament.

WHILE the venerable name of Calvin is before us, perhaps it may not be improper to bring into public view, another observation of his upon a noted text, resorted to with much assurance, by his disciples of the present generation, as substantial proof of the supreme and independent Divinity of the Son, *I and my Father are one.*|| These are the words of Christ. On this passage Calvin thus remarks.§ “The ancients greatly perverted this passage, when they would prove from it, that Christ is of identically the same nature (or consubstantial) with the Father. For Christ speaks not concerning an unity of substance; but of the mutual agreement between the Father and himself; to wit, affirming, that, whatsoever he does, would be sanctioned by the power of the Father.”

* II Cor. x. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. —† “Quod autem eliciunt ex hoc loco christiani doctrinam de tribus in Deo personis, vereor ne satis firmum sit argumentum.” —

‡ Chris. disc. on divine unity, Page 12, second edition. —|| John x. 30. —

§ “Abusi sunt hoc loco veteres, ut probarent Christum esse *omnino*. Neque enim Christus de unitate substantiæ disputat: Sed de consensu, quem cum Patre habet: Quicquid scilicet geritur a Christo, Patris virtute confirmatum iri.” Harm. in loco.

No less do the moderns pervert, when they interpret it, as did the ancients. For,

1. It appears, from the context, that the Jews, as he walked in Solomons porch, "came round about him and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Upon this our Lord observed, that the works, which they had seen him perform in his Father's name, were the proper answer to their question, and rendered the inquiry useless. He, then, proceeds to state the true reason of their unbelief. Having done this, and also declared the safety and blessedness of those who believed on him, he plainly answers their question, *I and my Father are one*. This was the same thing as saying *I am the Christ*. Upon this reply the Jews took up stones to stone him. Our Lord says, that he had shewed them many good works from the Father; and asks for which of these works they would stone him? They answer, that it is not for any good work, but for blasphemy; he being a man, yet having made himself God. Did the Jews *really think* him a blasphemer? That it was his design to assert that he was God? Neither on this nor any other occasion, did they really think so; though it is what they more than once *pretended*. Strange, that our modern divines should have so much charity for these Jews; these insidious and watchful enemies of our Lord. Strange, that students of the scriptures should, when this controversy is upon the carpet, forget, that emissaries were sent, from time to time, *to catch him in his words*;* that they *lay in wait for him, and sought to catch something out of his mouth whereby they might accuse him*.† Very little opinion have we of the honesty and integrity of these Jews. We give very little credit to their declarations, that they understood our Lord, on this and other occasions, to make himself God. We strongly *suspect*, that *possibly* they might have taken occasion to *wrest and pervert his words*; numerous instances of which conduct the evangelists have recorded. Yea, we affirm, that this was actually the case

* Mark, xii. 13.—† Luke, xi. 54.

in the instance before us. No other supposition will account for our Lord's reply. In making this pretence they had put him to the test. If he were really God supreme, as they pretended his words suggested, it became him to acknowledge that they had interpreted his language aright. But, instead of this, he proceeds to prove to them from their scriptures, that he should not have been guilty of any blasphemy against the great Supreme, even had he assumed to himself the title of God, in order to express his commission from the Father ; seeing the scripture itself, which they acknowledged to be of divine authority, gives this title to those, whom God has commissioned. But, says our Lord, I assumed not this title ; though, with much more propriety, might it be applied to me, than to the prophets, or rulers of the nation. For, I am the Christ : He whom the Father hath appointed to this distinguished office. This is all that I have said. My words amount merely to a declaration, that *I am the Christ, the Son of God*. And, whether it be blasphemy against God to say this, judge ye.

" Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are Gods ? If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; because I said I am the Son of God ?" If our Lord considered their pretence, that he had made himself God, a fair and just interpretation of his words ; why does he shew them from the scriptures, that the name, God, does not always signify the supreme God, but is bestowed upon such, as God has commissioned ? Why affirm, that the amount of the declaration, *I and my Father are one*, is merely this, *I am the Son of God* ? If he knew himself to be the supreme Jehovah, why does he not say at once, *You understand me right. I am verily and truly the supreme God. If you stone me, you do it at your peril*. But, instead of this, he asserts only what we have stated above ; And proceeds to refer them to the proof, which he had afforded of his being the Christ ; to wit, the miraculous works he had performed in his Father's name. *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do,*

though ye believe not me (my bare assertion) believe the works (which can be wrought only by divine influence) that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.

We are not ignorant that some, in their zeal, endeavor to distort these last words of Christ into a declaration, that he is what the Jews pretended. As though he had said, "If I do not perform works, which none but the supreme God can perform, then do not believe that I am the supreme God. But, seeing I do, then know that the Father and myself are one common existence; that I am as much the supreme God, as is the Father." But are not these words fully explained, by his declaration in this very discourse? "The works, which I do *in my Father's name*, they bear witness of me." To perform works, *in the name of another*, is to do them by authority delegated from him. And do not the scriptures say, *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God.** Pray, are we hence to infer, that all believers have one common existence with God? That they are the great Supreme?

2. That the unity, which our Lord affirms himself to have with the Father, is not an unity of essence, substance, or being, is evinced from the consideration, that, whenever the unity of two persons is spoken of in scripture, it always means something else; an unity of harmony, agreement in conduct, cause, or design. Thus, *He that planteth and he that watereth are one.†* Now he that planted was Paul. He that watered was Apollos. But were Paul and Apollos, though two persons, *one being* only?

John teaches the unity, Christ has with the Father, to be an unity of harmony only, in such a striking and convincing manner, as not to be denied. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also, which shall believe on me through their word; that they may all be one *as*, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may

* 1 John, iv. 15.—† 1 Cor. iii. 8.—To save the critic a reply, we note that, in the Greek, it is of the neuter gender *as*.

be ONE ^{EV} IN US, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory, which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one ^{EV} AS WE ARE ONE ^{EV} ; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one ^{EV} ; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."*

Need we make any comment, by way of illustration, upon this striking passage ? Does it not speak, with sufficient plainness, for itself ? Does not the Lord Jesus pray, that the unity of the disciples with God and one another may be the same, that exists between himself and the Father ? And, if that unity be an unity of being or existence, does he not pray, that the disciples may have the very same unity ? Is not this passage a full and complete explanation of *I and my Father are one* ? Are the disciples, however, really distinct beings from the Father, and eternally to be so ? How, then, does the Lord Jesus Christ pray to the eternal Father, that they may be *one in us, as we are one ; I in them, and thou in me, and they in us* ? Did he mean to pray that they might become the great Supreme ? Or that they might have one common existence, subsistence, substance, being, with the Father ? And is it not equally improper thus to exalt the Son to the very *Being* of the supreme and infinite God, to whom he is here, as a dependent existence, offering up his fervent prayer and supplication ?

Will our opponents say that the Lord Jesus is here speaking of his *human nature* ? What does this avail them ? His prayer would still be, that christians might have the same unity with God, which his human nature has ; which, according to their scheme, is such an unity, that his person is not, properly speaking, human, but *divine* only : *Two natures in one person forever* says their creed. His prayer would then be, that christians might no longer be distinct beings from God, but so mysteriously united to him, as that it may be properly affirmed of them, that they are the only living and supreme God. And will humble christians believe, that they are to be

* John, xvii. 20—23.

partakers of the divine nature in any such manner as this !
Do they calculate on becoming human natures of the great Jehovah !

Strange, that, with the holy scriptures in their hands, and in them the solemn and plain declarations of the Lord Jesus in prayer to God, men should not understand the unity, which subsists between him and his Father. Strange, they should not see, that, in the nature of things, as well as from his own declarations, it must be an unity of harmony, affection, pursuit, and design only, and not of existence and attributes. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.*

SECTION XIII.

ANOTHER important argument, in proof of the supreme and independent divinity of Christ, and on which great emphasis is laid by our opponents, is derived from the divine appearances, recorded in the Old Testament, under the style of THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.

It is confidently asserted, that, by *the Angel of the Lord*, is meant some *particular angel*, distinct from all others, and, in his nature, wholly above them: By Trinitarians he is supposed to be Jehovah himself, the second person in the Trinity; even our Lord Jesus Christ. The Arians also acknowledge this Angel to be Christ: But, believing that he has the title of Jehovah, in a secondary sense only, they do not acknowledge him strictly the Supreme God. They consider him a superior messenger, through whom God created, preserves, and governs the world.

The reason of this opinion, concerning the Angel of the Lord, is, that he speaks and acts in the name and character of Jehovah, the God of Israel. And seeing the word, *Angel*, denotes one sent on an errand, it is concluded, that the Angel of the Lord cannot be God the Father; because he is always represented as the one who sends, never the one who is sent. It is hence inferred, that the Angel of the Lord must be our Lord Jesus Christ, whose common appellation is *the sent of God*.

THE true doctrine will be best ascertained by comparing the various declarations, concerning the Angel of the Lord, with one another, and by attending carefully to the illustrations, which different inspired writers have made on the subject.

A number of the most striking instances, where the Angel of the Lord appeared and spake to the ancients, shall now be produced. “And the angel of the Lord

found Hagar in the wilderness—and said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly.” Though this personage is styled *the Angel of the Lord*, four times in the context, yet *Hagar called the name of the Lord, that spake unto her, Thou God seest me.**

When Abraham was about to sacrifice his Son Isaac, “The angel of the Lord called to Abraham out of heaven and said—Lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know thou fearest God seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from ME.” Further, “And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, SAITH THE LORD, that in blessing I will bless thee—because thou hast obeyed my voice.” In conformity with this promise, “The Lord appeared unto Isaac and said, I will be with thee, and will bless thee, I will perform, the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy Father.”†

“And Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day : And he said, Let me go for the day breaketh. And Jacob replied, I will not let thee go until thou bless me : And he said, Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel ; for, as a prince, hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob called the name of that place Peniel ; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”‡ In reference to this transaction, the prophet Hosea, says, “By his strength he had power with God, yea he had power over THE ANGEL, and prevailed ; he wept and made supplication unto him ; he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even the Lord God of Hosts ; Jehovah is his memorial.”§ Again,

“And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses, in a flame of fire, out of the midst of the bush ; and he looked and behold the bush burned with fire and was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called un-

* Gen. xvi. 7, 10, 13.—† Gen. xxii. 11, 12, 15, 16, 18.—‡ Gen. xxxii. 24—30.—§ Hosea, xii. 3—5.

to him out of the middle of the bush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither ; put off thy shoes from off thy feet ; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said I have surely seen the affliction of my people, which are in Egypt, &c.—And Moses said unto God, behold when I am come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say unto me, What is his name ? What shall I say unto them ? And God said unto Moses, I am that I am. And he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you ; this is my name forever and this is my memorial unto all generations.”* These passages exhibit a fair and full view of the use of the phrase, *the Angel of the Lord*, in the Old Testament, and the manner of his speaking to the Patriarchs. At one time we find him declaring, that he speaks not in his own name ; but in the name of the Lord ; as in the case of his second appearance to Abraham, already recited. *And the Angel of the Lord said, By myself have I sworn, SAITH THE LORD, that in blessing I will bless thee.* At other times, he speaks in the style of God, *I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*, without giving any intimation, that he does not say this of himself, as the angel of the Lord, or that he speaks in the name of another. It is hence concluded, that these appearances and declarations are always made by some particular angel, who was in reality the God of Israel, and was Jesus Christ.

This conclusion, however, by no means follows from the premises ; neither is it warranted by the word of God.

Any angel whatever, sent by God and commissioned to make known his will to mankind, may very properly

* Exod. iii. 2—15.

be styled *the Angel of the Lord*. He, surely, is the Lord's messenger, whom the Lord sends. He is not the messenger of some idol God ; but the messenger of the true God, the Jehovah of Israel. There is nothing in the mere phraseology, *the Angel of the Lord*, which affords evidence that some particular angel is intended, in distinction from all others. The very same style is used respecting that angel, who announced to Joseph the miraculous conception of Mary, and concerning him also, who guarded the sepulchre of the risen Jesus ; as we shall see presently.

Nor is there any thing in the original, which limits, to some one particular angel, the appearances to the Patriarchs and the children of Israel. Sometimes the article, rendered *the*, is omitted, and sometimes inserted, even in those instances, where our translators have styled him *the* angel. It might with the same propriety, have been rendered, in all instances, *an* angel of the Lord. By the bare phraseology therefore, the conclusion, that some particular angel is meant, is by no means warranted.

Neither, because the Angel speaks in the style of God, does it follow, that the Angel was God himself. The very idea, of making a communication by a messenger, implies, that the being, who sends, is not that being who is sent, and, through the medium of whom, the communication is made. To suppose that a certain being may send a messenger on an errand to transact a particular business, and yet be himself that very messenger who is sent, is a perfect absurdity. A being may go, and do the business himself ; but, in so doing, it cannot be said, that he sends his angel or messenger to do it. When therefore the scripture informs, that it was the angel of the Lord, who said, *I am the God of Abraham*, &c. the account is equally plain to the understandings of men, that he spake not his own words, or in reference to himself, but the words of Jehovah, or in the name of God, as it is, when the angel is represented saying, *By myself have I sworn, SAITH THE LORD, that, in blessing, I will bless thee*. The prophets sometimes make use of this phrase, *Thus saith the Lord*. At others, they proceed to

utter the language of Jehovah, without any intimation that they are not speaking in their own name. In the second appearance to Abraham, the angel is careful to say, that he speaks the language of Jehovah. But, in the first appearance, the angel makes no such intimation ; saying *now I know that thou fearest God seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from ME.* Would it be rational to conclude hence, that at one time, he spake in his own name, and, at another in the name of the Lord ? Far more rational is it to conclude, that, seeing *we know* he, at one time, spake *not* in his own name, but in the name of another, using the common language of the Prophets, *thus saith the Lord*, he must have spoken *always* in the name of another, though the phrase, which indicates this, be omitted. This is necessarily the conclusion, until it be proved, that the angel, who appeared to Abraham the first time, was infinitely superior to him who appeared to him the second time. But as this is not supposable, it is plain, that God in both instances, made use of an angel as a medium, through whom he addressed the favorite patriarch. So when the angel of the Lord said, *I am that I am*, Moses understood him to speak this, not of himself but of Him, whose messenger he was : For he did not make his address unto the angel, but, as the account states, unto God.

But the best way of obtaining the truth is to compare scripture with scripture. *To the law and the testimony ; If a man speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in him.*

In the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we learn, that the angel, who appeared to Moses in the bush, was the same that gave the law from Mount Sinai. *And when forty years were expired, there appeared to Moses, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, AN angel of the Lord, in a flame of fire in a bush.* You will observe, that what in the Old Testament is called *the* angel of the Lord, is here, styled *an* angel of the Lord. Thus our translators have rendered it ; which, by the English reader, cannot but be viewed as corroborating our declaration, that the article might as well be rendered AN as *the*. *This Mo.*

ses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? The same did God send to be a deliverer, by the hand of the angel of the Lord, that appeared to him in the bush. Here it ought to be remarked, that God did not, *in person* send Moses to be a deliverer; but he sent him *through the medium of the angel of the Lord.* Nor does the scripture say merely, that he sent him by the hand of the angel of the Lord, as it doubtless would have done, had this phraseology pointed out to the Jews some one particular angel; but, the angel of the Lord *which appeared to him in the bush*: Plainly intimating, that he might be a different angel from others, who appeared to the patriarchs. *This is he, (Moses) that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel, which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our Fathers, who received the lively oracles to give unto us.*

It hence appears, that the angel, which spake to Moses in the bush, was the same, which spake the law from Mount Sinai; at least one of the angels who assisted on that occasion: For the scriptures represent that there were more than one. In this very discourse of Stephen, he says concerning the Jews, *Who have received the law by the disposition of ANGELS, and have not kept it.* Paul also affirms, that *The law was ordained by ANGELS in the hand of a Mediator;** i. e. Moses. It is hence evident, that there was a plurality of angels, who were concerned in the transactions at Sinai, though the angel, which, appeared to Moses in the bush, was probably the *speaker* on the occasion.

Now if the law of God, delivered at Sinai, without any mention of its being an angel who spake, were in fact delivered by the angel of the Lord, Jesus Christ, as our opponents affirm; how is it that Stephen and Paul make no distinction between him and the other angels, concerned in this transaction? It is evident that these inspired men had no idea of any such *particular Angel*, as is contended for at the present day.

Of this fact we have a still more striking evidence in the second chapter of Hebrews. Paul contrasts the Jewish

* Gal. iii. 19.

and christian dispensations, and affirms the latter far more worthy of attention than the former, seeing the one was introduced by the ministry of *angels* only ; whereas the other is introduced by the ministry of *the Lord Jesus*, whose superior dignity over the angels he had just stated, in the preceding chapter. " Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things, which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For, if the word, (the law from Mount Sinai) spoken by angels, was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward ; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him ? For unto the angels he (God) hath not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak ;"* i. e. the christian dispensation. Had Jesus Christ been the person, who appeared to Moses in the bush and spake the law from Mount Sinai, where would be the propriety, nay, the truth, of his representing it the word *spoken by angels* ? And where would be the force of the Apostle's conclusion, that we ought to give the more earnest heed to the system of christianity, from the consideration, that it is spoken, not by angels, but by the Lord Jesus Christ ? Do not his reasoning and declaration go on the ground, that Jesus Christ *did not* give the law of Sinai, but that it was spoken, commanded, or ordained, by the ministry of *angels only* ? Of angels *inferior* to the Son of God ?

Evident is it, therefore, that the angel of the Lord, who spake to Moses in the bush in the style of God, and who, in the same style, spake to the children of Israel from Sinai, saying, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage ; Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,*"† was neither God himself, nor the Lord Jesus Christ ; but of that description of angels, concerning whom it is said, *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them, who shall be heirs of salvation ?*‡ That the doctrine may be still further exposed we will fulfil our prom-

* Heb. ii. 2, 3, 5. —† Exod. xx. 1—3. —‡ Heb. i. 14.

ise to produce examples, in which the angel of the Lord cannot be Christ. Behold THE ANGEL OF THE LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, *Joseph, thou Son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, for that, which is conceived of her, is of the Holy Ghost.** According to this Christ was already in the flesh; and could not be the angel of the Lord, that spake to Joseph:

“ And behold there was a great earthquake ; for THE ANGEL OF THE LORD descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow, and for fear of him the keepers did shake and become as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye ; for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified ; HE IS NOT HERE ; for he is risen as he said.”† This personage certainly could not have been Jesus Christ, for he says, *He is not here.*

The appearance to the shepherds is thus represented. “ And lo, THE ANGEL OF THE LORD came upon them and THE GLORY OF THE LORD shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not ; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”‡ Surely it will not be said, that *the Angel of the Lord* announced to the Shepherds his own birth. Had this divinely majestic appearance been recorded in the Old Testament, how would our opponents have seized upon it, as flagrant proof of the angel’s divinity.

Thus, diligently comparing scripture with itself, it is plain, that, by *the Angel of the Lord*, who so often appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to Moses and the children of Israel, speaking and acting in the name of God, we are not to understand, according to Trinitarians, the Supreme God himself, a second person in the Trinity and Jesus Christ, or any particular angel, nor, according,

* Matt. i. 20. —† Matt. xxviii. 1—6. —‡ Luke, ii. 9—11.

to the Arians, a derived dependent God, the Creator and God of the Jews ; but angel, or angels sent forth to minister to them, who should be the heirs of salvation.

It will probably be objected, that, upon our scheme, the angel impiously assumes titles, which, if they do not belong to him, are calculated to lead mankind to idolatry.

But does it appear, that the Patriarchs, or Moses, or the Jews, in any of their generations, ever mistook the angel of the Lord for Him who sent him ? Is it ever said, that they sacrificed to the angel of the Lord ? Or, that they gave him divine worship as an angel ? We know of no instances of such mistake, or attempt to sacrifice, excepting two only ; and, in these, the mistake was as fully corrected at the time, as in the case of John. When the angel of the Lord authorized Gideon to redeem Israel, it seems, that he either mistook the angel for the Lord himself, or was uncertain whether the man, who appeared to him, were really an angel of the Lord. Having presented his offering, " The angel of God said unto him, take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth : And he did so. Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff, that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God ! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face."* If he mistook the angel for the Lord himself, it is then evident, that he was convinced of his mistake. But if he were uncertain whether he were only a man, then he was persuaded that he was really an angel of the Lord. The latter is, probably, the true opinion.

When the angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of Manoah, she supposed him to be an angel, addressing her in the name of the Lord. This intelligence she gave to her husband, saying, " A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God; very terrible ; but I asked him not whence he

* Judges, vi. 20—22.

was, neither told he me his name.—Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God, whom thou didst send, come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child, that shall be born. And God hearkened unto the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again unto the woman.” Manoah was at this time in the field ; but, when called by his wife, and the angel had given him directions concerning the child, then “Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee”—either for his refreshment or for a sacrifice unto him. Did the angel of the Lord allow them to bestow upon him worship ? If he were the supreme God himself he doubtless would have done. “The angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, though thou detain me I will not eat of thy bread ; and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, **THOU MUST OFFER IT UNTO THE LORD** ; for Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord.” Accordingly, he offered the kid, as a burnt offering unto the Lord, and the angel having acted wonderously, and ascended to heaven in the flame of the sacrifice, “then Manoah knew, that he was an angel of the Lord.”*

We have, therefore, as much evidence as can be desired, that the patriarchs and their posterity never considered the angel of God to be God himself, and that they never addressed, or sacrificed, or worshipped before him as such. Had they done this, they would, undoubtedly, have been corrected in their mistake, and told, as was Manoah, “If thou wilt offer a burnt offering, *thou must offer it unto the Lord.*” We have here the same evidence, that the angel of the Lord was not Jehovah himself, as that the angel, who appeared to John, was not the true God and the object of his worship. The one, as decidedly as the other, directed the worship from himself to the great Supreme.

The idea, that mankind must be liable to mistake and idolatry, if the angel of the Lord were not Jehovah, is exposed by the consideration, that the scriptures as clear-

* Jude, xiii. 6—21.

ly distinguish the angel of the Lord from the Lord himself, as they do the prophets. Of this there is a multitude of instances ; several of which occur in the three first chapters of the prophecy of Zechariah. There the angel of the Lord sometimes speaks as though he were Jehovah in person. At other times, he uses the phrase, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts*. Indeed, the angel of the Lord is represented, in the Old Testament, as addressing Jehovah in the language and manner of the ancient prophets. On the other hand, as Jehovah addresses and commands the prophets, so he addresses and commands the angel of the Lord.

Instead of being led astray, it is most evident that the Jews, in the days of the Apostles, universally considered the angel a distinct being from Jehovah, in all his manifestations to the fathers. It was an acknowledged doctrine with them, that God always exhibited himself through the same medium ; that he delivered his counsels through the instrumentality of ministering spirits. In giving the law at Sinai, though the language is that of God, speaking in his own person, the Jews supposed angels to have been employed. Were not this the case, Stephen and Paul would never have addressed the Jews to this point as they did. They would never have affirmed, that the law was spoken and ordained by angels, as a fact, which was universally acknowledged.

That we do not proceed upon uncertain ground in denying Jesus Christ to be God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which style the angel, who appeared to Moses in the bush, assumed, is rendered unquestionable by a passage in the history of the Apostles. When Peter and John had cured the lame man, they say, " Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this, or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though, by our own power or holiness, we had made this man to walk ? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus ; and his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong."* Now if Jesus Christ were that personage, who styles himself the God of Abraham, of

* Acts, iii. 12-16.

Isaac, and of Jacob, then he is the Son of himself, and has glorified himself by giving power to his own name. Why then did not the Apostles say plainly to the Jews, "Jesus Christ, whom ye crucified, is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and hath impowered us to work this miracle?" Did the Apostles *prudently conceal* this fact, knowing that they were unable to receive it? How could this be, if, as some erroneously allege, the Jews expected the God of heaven for their Messiah? The truth is, the Apostles did not believe in any such doctrine. They knew, that Christ, instead of being *the God of their Fathers*, was merely *his Son*. They knew, also, that they wrought miracles in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, as in the name of one, whom the God of their fathers had glorified with exalted powers, and made head over all things to the church. This is the explanation, which they give. It is the true doctrine on the subject. Jesus Christ, therefore, was not that personage, who appeared to the patriarchs, under the style of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

SECTION XIV.

A CONSIDERATION of two very popular objections shall close this part of our work.

1. Is it not said *Cursed be man, that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm?** If Christ be not the supreme God, how is it that, in putting our trust in him, we do not come under the curse?

THE passage, quoted above, designates those only, who make not the Lord Jehovah their supreme trust, but place it entirely on their fellow creatures. Hence the passage adds, by way of explanation, *and whose heart departeth from the Lord.* But, trusting in Christ, our heart departeth not from the Lord, but *obeyeth the voice of the Lord*, who has said, *Behold MY SERVANT whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth, he shall shew forth judgment unto victory, and IN HIS NAME SHALL THE GENTILES TRUST.* You will observe that we are commanded to behold and to trust in Christ, as God's *servant*. We cannot discharge our duty, without paying attention to the divine injunction, *God hath set forth Christ to be the propitiation of our sins.* He has appointed him to be the Saviour and Redeemer, the means through whom he effects our deliverance from death. Shall we refuse to trust in the means, which God has prescribed? Or shall we plead that the above curse exempts from the duty, *in him shall the Gentiles trust?*

The Israelites trusted in Moses to deliver them from Egyptian bondage; which was typical of our deliverance from sin by the Prophet, who, though like unto Moses, was far greater than he. But did the Israelites come within the curse for so doing? Or was it considered that their heart departed from the Lord? On the

* Jerem. xvii. 5.

contrary, did not their heart depart from the Lord, and were they not cursed, when they refused to acknowledge the standing of Moses, and would not put that confidence in him, as their Saviour and Redeemer, which the Lord had enjoined? *He that receiveth you*, says Christ to his apostles, *receiveth me*; and *he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me*.* And *he that despiseth you, despiseth me*; and *he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*.† To trust in him, whom God has appointed, is the same as to trust in God himself. Such an one is trusted in upon no other principle than his being divinely commissioned, and, therefore, the trust is ultimately in that God who commissioned him.

2. WHAT atonement can there be, if Christ be not verily the Supreme God? Is not sin an infinite evil? And who, besides an infinite Being, can expiate sin?

Sin, Paul observes, appears by the commandment to be *exceedingly sinful*. But where do the scriptures say, that it requires an infinite Being *to declare the righteousness of God, that he might be just and the justifier of the ungodly, who believeth*? It is not good to be wise above what is written. Though it be common to hear it said by our divines, that none but an infinite Being can make atonement for sin, yet you will find no declaration of this kind in the scriptures, if you search your bible throughout. It is possible, that the scheme of atonement deemed inseparably connected with the Deity of Christ, is as erroneous as their doctrine concerning his person. We have no doubt but it is really the case. Be this however as it may, though we were not able to ascertain in what the ground of atonement consists, and though we could not see how what Christ has done becomes efficacious, it is nothing essential one way or the other. Sufficient, that we know there is that done by Christ, which lays a foundation for the pardon of those, who trust in the mercy of God through his name. Shall we limit the power and wisdom of the Almighty? Is it not easy for Him to save by few as by many? Where is the man, who

* Matt. x. 40. —† Luke x. 16.

can look through all the reasons of divine appointments ? Or calculate with exactness, their extensive influence in the moral system ? These reasons are not always seen by his short sighted creatures.

Respecting the ground of atonement by Christ, the greatest and best divines very much differ. With multitudes it is entirely a matter of doubt ; a subject by no means settled in their minds. It cannot therefore be essential, that it be fully understood. Nor is it modest in any man to say, that there could be no ground of atonement, unless Christ were the infinite God ; seeing the scripture makes no such declaration.

Did the supposed *divine nature* become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ? Did divinity itself suffer ? Our opponents do not pretend it. This is true only of *the man Christ Jesus*. Whatever virtue in his obedience unto death, must therefore be the virtue of the man Christ Jesus only.

BUT, say our opponents, the union of divinity to the humanity conferred an infinite dignity upon the sufferings of the human nature, and rendered them infinitely precious, so as to amount, in effect, to the eternal sufferings of the whole human race. Thus Christ satisfied the demands of justice, in the room and stead of our apostate world.

THE doctrine that the union of the divinity to humanity conferred an infinite dignity upon the sufferings of the human nature, is only an imagination of their own brain ; for the scriptures say nothing of this absurdity. They say nothing of the virtue of his sufferings being enhanced by any such connexion. If the union of Deity to humanity rendered the humanity any thing different from mere humanity ; if it raised it beyond its natural dignity to the dignity of God ; why may we not conclude, that it rendered it *impossible, incapable of suffering* ? This, in the days of the apostles, was the conclusion of certain metaphysical reasoners. And it may be as well inferred, from the consideration of the union of Deity to humanity,

that Christ must have been *impassible*, as that the sufferings of the man Christ Jesus were infinitely more than human sufferings.

But was the humanity of Christ really any thing more than bare humanity ? Did it become converted into any angelic or divine nature ? Something different from what it is declared and supposed to be ? It will not be pretended. Its dignity, therefore, was human dignity only, and not divine dignity. Its sufferings were human sufferings only, and not divine sufferings. What then becomes of the doctrine, that Christ suffered, in the room and stead of sinners, that, which was equivalent to the eternal damnation of the whole human race !

It was, say our opponents, a *divine person*, who suffered ; and therefore these sufferings were precious, in proportion to the dignity of the personage suffering.— They will have it that it was *GOD*, who died on the cross.

That Christ was really the infinite God, is a doctrine not known in the scriptures. Besides, may we not turn the tables and say, that God's hungering and thirsting, in the human nature, after earthly food, was infinitely derogatory from the dignity of the divine nature, as to affirm, that God's suffering on the cross, in the human nature, conferred an infinite dignity upon that, and rendered its sufferings inconceivably more precious, than merely human sufferings ? Sufferings surely denote great weakness, want of strength, and dignity of nature. And, since the infinite God suffered, he must be very *weak*, *impotent*, and *devoid of dignity*.

Do our opponents dislike this representation ? Will they say that these things are true only of the human nature, the man Christ Jesus ? Then let them not confound things, which they themselves distinguish. Let them acknowledge, that the sufferings of the man Christ Jesus were clothed with no other than merely human dignity ; and were no more precious than merely human sufferings. Let them look out for some more scriptural and rational doctrine of atonement : For there is, clearly, no more

ability in the man Christ Jesus to satisfy divine justice, upon their scheme, than upon ours.

We have many other remarks to make upon this extraordinary doctrine, that there can be no atonement for sin, unless made *to* the infinite God, *by* the infinite God. But we venture, for the present, to rest the answer to their objection on what has already been observed.



PART II.

SECTION I.

HAVING shown upon what grounds we are not convinced, by the arguments of the advocates for the supreme and independent deity of Christ, we proceed to state what appears to us *direct and positive proof, that Christ is not the most high God, but a being entirely distinct from God, inferior and dependent, his Son, servant, messenger, &c.*

The first, which naturally presents to our view, is, that the divine oracles declare Jesus Christ A HUMAN PERSON, or A HUMAN BEING. If this can be made clearly to appear, the doctrine, that he is a divine person only, must be relinquished. For, upon no principle can it be made to appear, that a divine person, *and* a human person are but *one* person only.

And this would seem to need no particular testimonies, since we all agree, that he was completely and perfectly man. For nothing is more plain, than that he cannot be completely man, if any essential property of man be wanting. Now all men are, confessedly, human persons. A man never existed, who was not of this description. No one of our race, excepting a mere animal idiot, can be conceived of, without being considered as a human, intelligent, moral agent, distinct from all other orders of personal existences, capable of using or having applied, with strict propriety, and without figure, the personal pronouns *I, thou, and he*, in relation to himself and others of the human race; capable of distinct thought and actions, internal and external: In short, having an intelligent spirit, united to a fleshly body, mutually acting upon, and being acted upon by each other; yet, at the

same time, distinct and separate from all other souls and bodies whatsoever. This is the plain, obvious idea of a complete man. Where these things exist, it is the universal decision of common sense, that there is, to all intents and purposes, a human person. These are the very things, which go into the idea conveyed by the phrase.

Now to deny, as our opponents do, and are compelled to do, in order to make out their doctrine of "two natures in *one* person forever," that Christ was a complete human person, is evidently to deny, that he was really and completely a man. For in taking away his human personality, you take away the essential properties of human nature. The supposition, that one is completely a man, and yet no human person, is grossly absurd. Pray, what kind of a creature would that be, concerning whom it might be strictly and truly said, that he is a complete and perfect man, and yet that he is not strictly and truly, a human person! Surely our opponents must have discovered a certain secret in the word, *person*, that they are able to work the wonder of divesting a man of his human personality, while they allow all the essential properties of his nature to stay behind!—But leaving the consideration of this secret, which, it must be supposed, cannot easily be communicated to the understandings of common people, let it be our inquiry, what say the scriptures respecting this matter?

1. They assert, *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.** Now if Christ were in all things, like unto his brethren of the human race, it is plain, that, whatever they are in the scale of existence, he was the same. They are human beings and human persons, in distinction from all other orders angelic or divine. If Christ were not a human being and person in distinction from all other orders, angelic or divine, surely he was not in all things like unto his brethren. A human being and person is a different order, or grade of existence from a divine being and person. Man is not of that order of personal existences, which comprises angels. Nor is he of that highest order, constituted by the

* Heb. ii. 17.

Deity. He is of an order inferior to both. If Christ ranked in the order of man, he was neither Angel nor God. To say, that Christ was not a human being and person, as is the case with man, is surely to make him something different from his brethren. He surely cannot have that essential likeness to them, which they have to one another. If therefore Christ were a man, in all things, *even in all the essential and distinguishing features of human nature*, like unto his brethren, he certainly must have been, to all intents and purposes, a *human being*, a *human person*.

But how does this comport with the doctrine, that he is a divine being only ; a divine person only ? or indeed that he is a divine being or person at all ? Is not a *divine being one being* ? Is not a *human being one being* ? And does not *one divine being* and *one human being*, when added together, amount to *two beings* ? Further ; is not a *divine person one person* ? Is not a *human person one person* ? And does not *one divine person* and *one human person*, when added together, amount to *two persons* ? Now is it not an evident contradiction in terms to say that *two beings*, in number, make no more than *one being* in number ? Or that *two persons*, in number, make no more than *one person* in number ? And is it not in mathematical demonstration, that, if Christ be a divine being *and* a human being, he is *two beings* ? And, if a divine person *and* a human person, he is *two persons* ? And, is it not plain, that, in order to reduce these two beings or persons to one being or person, there must necessarily be a subtraction of one being or person ? [$2-1=1$.] Now if Christ were either a human being and person, or a divine being and person, and yet was but one being and person only, then, if he were a divine being and person, he was not a human being and person ; and vice versa. But the scriptures declare that he was in all things like unto his brethren ; that is a human being and person, for such are they. It undeniably follows, therefore, that he was not a divine being and person at all, but a human being and person only.

2. All the personal pronouns are applied to Christ and other representations are made concerning him, as being *a human person*; and this without figure. "*I* can do nothing of *myself*." "*I* am not alone but the Father is with *me*." "Therefore doth the Father love *me* because *I* lay down *my* life." "Jesus wept. Then said the Jews behold how he loved him." "Now is *my* soul troubled, and what shall *I* say? Father save *me* from this hour," "*Thou* art not yet fifty years old, and hast *thou* seen Abraham?" "No man said, why talkest *thou* with her?" "And *I*, if *I* be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto *me*." "This said *he* signifying what death *he* should die." "*My* God, *my* God, why hast thou forsaken *me*?" "Go, tell the brethren *I* ascend to *my* Father and to your Father, to *my* God and to your God."—All these personal pronouns, and this manner of speaking, are wholly without figure, and most evidently describe Christ to be a human person. There is not a single instance to be found on the page of scripture, which represents him not a human person; which represents him an impersonal human nature; or, to talk in the style of our opponents, which makes this representation concerning his *humanity*. There is no one representation, which may be adduced to prove, that Paul, Peter, James, or John, was a human person, which cannot, with the same propriety and in the very same manner, be also applied to Christ in proof that he was a human person. Those, who deny him to be really and truly a human person, will not be able to produce a single text of scripture, which designates him a man, which does not also designate him a human person. And if all the personal phraseology and representation, applied to Paul and proving him a human person, be also applicable to Christ; in the name of consistency, why shall we suppose such phraseology and representation to prove the human personality of the one, and not of the other! It is high time for our opponents to cease their charge against us, of perverting the plain letter of scripture, so long as they affirm, that these representations do not designate him *a human person*. Is he also *a divine person*?

What does this make short of *two* persons ? contrary to their hypothesis.*

* In a late publication on the subject, we have seen the following extraordinary passage ; which, however, we should not have noticed, did it not contain a doctrine, advocated by certain divines in this vicinity.

"Christ is properly a *complex person*. He has a *distinct* human personality—and a *distinct divine* personality—and yet so united as to make a *complex person*."*

This is indeed an *improvement* in theology. All the orthodox divines in Europe we have ever read, or whose sentiment on this point we have seen stated, have uniformly denied Christ to be a human personality. Shy of falling into an obvious contradiction in terms, they have contented themselves with saying, "Two *distinct natures* in *one person only*, and that person *in the divine nature*." It may not indeed be the case, but we very much question whether it be not, in fact, a doctrine entirely new. We certainly never heard of the doctrine before.

A *distinct human* person, and a *distinct divine* person, making, when added together, a *complex person*, in the singular number ! *Two* infinitely diverse persons make but *one* person, though each is distinct from the other !—That *two* distinct things should be confounded into one, *even while they are distinct*, is carrying mystery into the superlative degree !!! Why may we not still improve, and say, that a distinct human nature, and a distinct divine nature make, when added, *one complex nature* ? Who can deny this logic upon the premises above ?

But is not a distinct human personality with a distinct human nature, a *distinct human being* ? And is not a distinct divine personality with a distinct divine nature, a *distinct divine Being* ! It cannot be gainsayed. Here then, we have two distinct and infinitely diverse beings, constituting ONE AND THE SAME BEING ; to wit, THE INFINITE GOD !!!

* Alexander p. 57.

SECTION II.

THE scriptures represent Christ SOME OTHER than the Supreme God, and INFERIOR to him, in the same terms and manner that they do prophets, apostles and others; and this without suggesting, that he possesses, at the same time, a superior divine nature.

1. He is styled *the* SON of God. This title is so generally applied to him, that, it is unnecessary to produce any particular instances. And whatever be the meaning of the phrase, *only begotten*, sometimes used in connexion, it is plain, that it does not intend to deny him to be a Son. The term, Son, implies *derivation of existence*. This idea is inseparable from the prime meaning of the word. It is the very first thought, which strikes the mind when the term is mentioned.

The term, Son, implies also, that the being, thus denominated, *began to exist*, and *is not so old* as the Father, who begat him. It is impossible for the human mind to think of a SON ETERNAL; or that, as is the age of him who begat, so is the age of him who is begotten by him.

The term Son implies, further, that the being, who is thus styled, is *dependent for his existence upon the Father* who begat. It is not in the ability of any one to consider, that the Son is, in the matter of existence, as independent of the Father, as the Father is independent, in this respect, of the Son.

Moreover, the term, Son, denotes *distinction of being from the Father*. No one can think of a Father and a Son, and yet imagine, that there is *but one individual being*, any more than that the cause is the effect, and the effect is the cause.

These considerations, to wit, *derivation, beginning of existence, inferiority of age, dependence upon the Father, and distinction of being from him*, go into the very idea of

A Son. And this term, being applied to Christ in its literal sense, declares him not the supreme, eternal, underrived, and independent God.

But, say our opponents, the term, Son, plainly implies, that he is of the **SAME NATURE** with the Father ; and, as the nature of the Father is divine, this must also be the nature of the Son.

We know indeed, that *whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh*. But the Son of Power, is only the effect of a cause, and may be inferior in its nature. Will our opponents pretend, that the Son of God, as such, was begotten or generated *after the manner of the flesh* ! Let us, therefore, go away from human generation, when we speak of an entirely different affair. Did God beget after the manner of men, it would indeed follow, that the Son is of similar nature, that is, divine. This however, is not the case. Still, *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit*. It has the powers and properties of rational intelligence, but not to the same degree, as the spirit which begets. Angels, who are styled *the Sons of God*, are intelligent, moral, and spiritual beings, like their eternal Father. But, though not Sons after the manner of the flesh, yet, all the considerations we have mentioned, to wit, *derivation, beginning of existence, inferiority of age, dependence upon the Father, distinction of being from him*, go into the idea of their being *the Sons of God*. Adam *was the Son of God*, strictly and literally so. Was he of the same nature with the Father, who begat him ? He was of the same nature only in the sense, which has been suggested concerning the Angels ; and all the considerations, above mentioned, go into the idea of his being *the Son of God*. Christ is the Son of God, in every sense in which man, or angel is so. To consider him a Son, not in this sense, but in a sense wholly different, is to charge divine inspiration with having represented him under a term, calculated to impose upon our understandings. For, leave out the idea of derivation, inferiority of age, dependence upon the Father, beginning of existence, distinction of being from him, and what meaning have we to the word *Son of God* ? We know, that, unless taken

in a moral and figurative sense, or as a name for the Messiah, no meaning whatever would remain. Since, therefore, divine wisdom does not use "words without knowledge," we conclude with assurance, that the Son of God is not the underived, eternal, independent Being.

We might further add, seeing some consider the phrase, Son of God, to designate him the supreme and independent God, that, were it implied in the term Son, that *he is of the same nature*, it would not follow that *he is numerically the same being*. The Son after the flesh, though of similar or like nature, is never the identical being that begat him. In number, the Father and the Son are always *two beings*. If each be a supreme and independent God, then there are *two* supreme and independent Gods.

2. Christ is styled *MAN*, in innumerable instances. Yea, he is thus styled in connexion with the one only living and true God. *To us there is but one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.** The term, *man*, invariably denotes, when used for an individual, a finite dependent being, limited in all his capacities, and subject to mortality. It is a term, by which every one, to whom it is applied, is supposed to be a distinct being from God, and dependent upon him for all things. A term therefore which declares the dependence of Christ in the same manner, as, the dependence of every individual of the human race is declared.

But was he not incarnate by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost? Born of a Virgin without an earthly father? And does not his *miraculous conception* afford evidence, that he was not a man as other men are?

The miraculous conception was only a mode of his becoming a man; and does not render him a different order of being. It matters not how any one becomes a man, if he really be a man. This simple idea of *man* takes into consideration only the qualities and properties of mankind, as a peculiar order of existence. It has nothing to do with the manner of their formation, or introduction to their present state. It by no means implies,

* I Tim. ii. 5.

that the person, styled man, was born in the common way of generation. Adam was as completely a man, as any of his posterity ; Yet he was not conceived in the common mode. The proper definition of a man is, *a distinct personal being, constituted by a rational spirit, so united to a human body that they mutually influence each other.* Wherever we see such a being, we see *a man.* It matters not how he became such. This is what he actually is at present. Whether he were conceived miraculously ; or in the ordinary method ; or formed without any conception at all ; still he is a man. He is a distinct personal being, constituted by an intelligent spirit, it, so united to a human body, that they mutually influence each other. Nor does it matter any thing, as to what he now is, whether his body were formed before his spirit, or his spirit before his body ; whether he were once a mere animal nature ; or whether merely an intelligent spirit. The question is, not what he once was, or how he came to be in the present situation ; but *What is he now ?* And this question is answered, by a consideration of his properties, qualities, or description. If his qualities, properties, or description be those of a man, then he is a man, whatever he may have been formerly, or however he became what he is at present. The present properties only are to be considered, in determining what any thing now is. In order to determine one to be a man, we no more take into consideration any thing previous to what is now seen, than we do any thing subsequent. Mankind, we are informed, are to live hereafter, with souls and bodies united. This is in the creed of every christian. But suppose revelation should inform us, that President Jefferson, who is now unquestionably a man, will, *hereafter*, be a pure, ethereal, disembodied spirit, and be exalted into the rank and order of Cherubim or Seraphim ; would this distant circumstance render him a Cherubim or a Seraphim *now ?* Would any philosophical connoisseur in the distinct orders and grades of being, when he comes to analyze our President, bring in his verdict, that he is *a nondescript* upon the earth ? Would he not rather decide, that he is

really and truly a man, *and nothing more?* Grant then, that the Son of God was formerly a disembodied spirit, in glory with the Father before all worlds; that he literally came down from heaven; took the body which God prepared for him; that he was miraculously conceived; and of the seed of David as to the flesh only; still while here upon the earth, he was *perfectly man*, in all things like unto his brethren of our race. Notwithstanding what he may have been formerly, and notwithstanding what he may have become since, he was, *then*, a man, constituted by an intelligent spirit so united to a body, that they mutually influenced each other. Hence the scriptures declare, in the plainest terms, that he was a "MAN." And, as they do not once hint, where they use this term concerning him, that he was, at the same time, possessed of a superior divine nature, as an essential property of his existence, the conclusion is obvious, that they state him *a being dependent on God for his existence and all his powers*, in the same manner, that this is stated concerning others, when they are styled men.

3. HE is said to be *SENT*, or to be a *MESSENGER* of God. This is a designation very frequently applied to him. But nothing can be more evident, than that the being, *sent*, cannot be *that being, who sent him*. The very idea, of sending on an errand, involves distinction of being. No being can send himself. Christ, therefore, cannot be that God, who sent him. The same representation is made concerning a multitude of others, and always proves, that they are not the great Supreme, whatever may be the powers they possess, or the high titles which they bear.

4. CHRIST is styled the *SERVANT* of God. *Behold my servant, whom I have chosen.** He has, repeatedly, this designation. The same style is given also to Job, and a multitude of others. It is one method of proof, that they are not the supreme God.

* Isaiah, xlii. 1.

The argument is this. A servant implies a master, a distinct being, and superior to him. No master can say, *Behold my servant, whom I have chosen*, and mean himself. No one can be a master, and, at the same time, a servant to the same being. And since it is never hinted, that Christ has, at the same time, a superior and divine nature, in which he is not the servant of the supreme God, the conclusion is obvious, that he cannot be the independent Supreme.

5. He is styled ο Χριστός *the CHRIST of God*. The term, Χριστός Christ signifies one anointed, consecrated, or set apart to some important office or work. *We have found the Messiah, which is (ὁ Χριστός the Christ) the anointed.* The kings of the earth stood up against the Lord, and κατὰ τὸν Χριστὸν αὐτοῦ, against his Christ.—For of a truth against thy holy child (παῖδα servant) Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, (ὃν ἐχρίσας hast made Christ) both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together.†*

Now the anointed is never the same being with him, who anointed him. He, who consecrates, must also, be greater than the consecrated. There must be two beings, in order that the transaction be performed; and the less is anointed of the greater. Saul is styled the Lord's Christ. So is David, Cyrus and a multitude of others; and this is a consideration in proof, that they are not the supreme God. The application of this term to Jesus, without once intimating that he possesses a superior divine nature, in which he is not anointed, affords the same proof, which is afforded concerning others, that he, also, cannot be the supreme God.

6. The scriptures plainly distinguish him from God, as much as one being can be distinguished from another; and in the same manner that other beings are thus distinguished. *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.‡* He is here as much distinguished from the Father, as are the angels. *The*

* John, i. 41. —† Acts, iv. 26, 27. —‡ Matt. xvi. 27.

*Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David.** He is here as much distinguished from the Lord God, as king David. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.†* He is here as much distinguished from God, as from his disciples. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.‡* He is, here, in the same manner distinguished from God, as he is from the disciples. *Knowing that he, which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.¶* He is, here, in the same manner distinguished from God, that all christians are. “I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things.”§ He is, here, as much distinguished from God, as Paul, Timothy and the elect angels. *But ye are come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.¶* He is, here, as fully and in the same manner, distinguished from God, as the angels, the church of the first born, and the spirits of just men. *Go ye to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.*** But why do we multiply examples? He is every where distinguished from the supreme God, represented a distinct being from him, as fully and in the very same manner, that any others, mentioned in scripture, are thus represented; and this without once suggesting, that he has, at the same time, a superior divine nature, in which he is not to be thus distinguished. He cannot, therefore, be the one Supreme God.

7. THE scriptures represent Christ often *PRAYING* to God. *Father glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory, which I had with thee before the world was.††* *Abba Father all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me.‡‡* It is needless to enlarge. Christ was

* Luke, i. 32. —† Chap. xxii. 29. —‡ Chap. x. 16. —¶ II Cor. iv. 14. —§ I Tim. v. 21. —¶ Heb. xii. 22. —** John, xx. 17. —†† John, xvii. 5. —‡‡ Mark, xiv. 36.

a man of prayer ; and God heard him always. He even now ever liveth to make intercession.

It is one decided proof, that Paul and others were distinct beings from the Father and dependent upon him, that they are often found offering up to him their petitions. And it is on this principle. The very idea of petition, is an address to another being on whom we are dependent for the things requested. No being can pray to himself. The very supposition is absurd.

That Christ was not the being, whom he addressed, is also evident from the words of his address, when on the cross. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.** If this passage have the construction, which our opponents put upon it, the proof against them is irresistible. Pray what had become of the supposed divine nature, to which he was united ? Had that really forsaken him ? Or did the man Christ Jesus forget, at this trying juncture, his union with Deity ? That he was a divine person only, the infinite and supreme God himself ? Or shall we say that the divine nature separated itself from him for a season, and allowed him to be, once in his life, what we declare he always was ? If the declaration, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*, do not prove, to demonstration, that Jesus of Nazareth was a distinct being from his God, a distinct person, entirely dependent upon him, and therefore not the supreme God himself ; then it is vain to search for any language, by which any being can be proved to be thus distinct from the supreme God.

We notice another remarkable form of expression to this point, in a prayer of our Lord concerning his disciples, " This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."†

We are not ignorant of what our opponents say, in order to elude the force of this passage. Nor shall we trespass on the patience of the reader, by following the tedious round of their arguments ; arguments, which are of no weight whatever, without the previous supposition of the truth of their system ; and, even then, upon no other

* Matt. xxvii. 46. —† John, xvii. 3.

principle, than a kind of necessity of endeavoring to reconcile this passage, as being a very apparent contradiction to it. That he does not intend to include himself, as being the only true God, is manifest :

First, From the consideration, that he is praying to the only true God. The being addressing is not the one addressed.

Secondly, He makes eternal life to depend on knowing both the sender and the sent. A distinction of being, between himself and the only true God, is here also clearly exhibited,

Thirdly, He acknowledges himself to have been sent into the world by the Father, whom he styles the only true God. No being, in prayer to himself, can acknowledge that he has sent himself.

It is worthy of remark, he does not say that they might know thee, *the only God*, but *the only true God* ; excluding not only all false Gods of the heathen, but all inferior Gods ; for the word *true* in this connexion, does not denote *veracity* but *real and proper God*. Now, though there are Lords many and Gods many, even those, who are really commissioned by divine authority ; yet there is no real and proper God, but the great Supreme, who is God of Gods. Our Lord, therefore, confines real and proper divinity wholly to the Father, exclusively of himself and all other beings, whether real or imaginary,

SECTION III.

CHRIST DISCLAIMS the attributes of the divine nature, **UNDERIVED POWER, OMNISCIENCE,** and **SELFEXISTENCE.** *I can of my own self do nothing.** This declaration respects his high power and authority of raising the dead and executing judgment ; which, he says, were bestowed upon him by the Father. It is a plain declaration of his incompetency to perform these works, *in and by himself*, or by the essential powers of his own nature. And since surpassing power and knowledge are requisite for their performance, the declaration substantiates his natural incompetency in both these particulars.

Of that day and hour knoweth no man ; no not the Angels which are in heaven ; neither the Son ; but the Father.† Matthew has it *but the Father only.* Here it is evident, that the representation rises in a climax. From *man* it ascends to the *Angels* ; from the *Angels* to the *Son* ; from the *Son to the Father* ; who is made the only exception. In this exalted grade of superiority to the Angels of heaven, the Son declares himself ignorant of the precise time, when that day of desolation is to come upon Jerusalem ; or, as some will have it, upon the world. The advocates for the Deity of Christ are not a little stumbled at this plain denial of omniscience, by the Savior, concerning himself, as well as men and angels.— Their conscience, feeling the force of this climax, is under no small degree of embarrassment, at resorting to the generally convenient doctrine of the human nature, for the explanation of the difficulty. The ingenious Dr. Mc. Knight, though persuaded that the Son has here his highest designation, yet, unwilling to see a passage of scripture so pointedly against the omniscience of Christ,

* John, v. 26.—† Mark, xiii. 32.

says, that the meaning of the assertion, *no one knoweth of that day*, is, "*no one maketh it known, or maketh men to know it,*" but the Father only. According to this statement, though neither men, nor angels, nor the Son of God, make to know, or specify to the world, the precise day and hour of this judgment, yet it is made known by the Father. But the learned Dr. has forgotten to inform us, in what subsequent part of scripture the Father has specified this dreadful day. On the occasion, on which this declaration was made, the Son informed of *the preceding signs*, by which men might know that it was at hand. But we cannot obtain in any part of scripture, further intelligence, concerning the day and hour of that event. Hence our Lord should have said, "Of that day no one maketh to know; no not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, *nor* the Father, instead of *but* the Father. We shall, therefore, receive the passage in its natural construction, and conclude it to be the declaration of our Lord, that he is not omniscient.

"*As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.*"* *I live by the Father.* What is this, but disclaiming self-existence? Let his living by the Father be considered as referring to his *natural* or *moral life*, the conclusion is exactly the same. It is an assertion, that he is not a self-existent and independent being.

* John, vi. 57.

SECTION IV.

THE scriptures represent Christ possessed of such **COMMUNICATED** or **DELEGATED POWERS** from God, as fairly account for all his high titles and wonderful works, without a necessary supposition of his supreme divinity.

*For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God—for we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God.”** We adduce this text to prove, that, even for resurrection from the dead, he is as much dependent upon the power of another, as his fellows. We now speak of the powers with which he is invested. *And Jesus came and spake unto them, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.†* Whatever power he has is *given*, or *delegated* unto him. This language can never be tortured to signify, that he has this power *inherently*.

But our cause does not depend on a single declaration. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.‡* What necessity of *giving* all things into his hands, if he eternally had had them in his possession? Indeed where is the possibility of *receiving* that, which is an eternal property of one's own nature?

“The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;—for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority *ἐξουσίαν* to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.—I can of my own self do nothing. As I hear I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of him that sent me.”§ What works or deeds more illustrious, than raising the universal dead, and executing judgment upon mankind! Yet these things, our Lord declares, *are delegated* to him, in consequence of his being the Son of man.

* II Cor. xiii. 4.—† Matt. xxviii. 18.—‡ John, iii. 35.—§ Chap. v. 20—**W**

“But I know that, even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.”* This is a declaration of the faith of one, who, Jesus declared, had chosen the better part. She did not suppose, that he had inherent power to raise her brother from the dead, but that God would give him this power, should he request it.

“For I have not spoken of myself: But the Father which sent me, he gave me commandment what I should say, and what I should speak.”† “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.”‡ Christ himself declares, that his doctrines are delivered by the inspiration of God.

In prayer to God and speaking of his disciples, he says, “Now they have known, that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee.”§ We hence learn it to have been the faith of the disciples, that all Christ’s wonderful powers, doctrines, knowledge, authority, &c. were not of himself, but from God; and this full assurance, our Lord, as appears from the context, urges in prayer to the Father, that they were not of the world.

The apostle Peter asserts, that the word, which God sent unto the children of Israel, and which was published throughout all Judea, concerning Christ, is this; “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him.”§ This is unquestionably an assertion, that the first preaching, concerning the powers of Christ, was, that *these powers were delegated to him from God*.

Paul, inspired to give account concerning the exaltation of Christ, tells the Ephesians how he came by it; “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory—raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church.”¶ That Christ’s highest authority and ti-

* John, xi. 22.—† Chap. xii. 49.—‡ Chap. vii. 16.—§ John, xvii. 7.—
§ Acts, x. 38.—¶ Eph. i. 20—22.

ties are *delegated to him, by his God*, cannot be more definitely expressed in any language whatsoever.

“The revelation of Jesus Christ, WHICH GOD GAVE UNTO HIM, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass ; and he sent and signified it, by his angel, unto his servant John.”* Here the futurity of all those events, contained in this book of prophecy, is declared to be as much a delegated or inspired revelation from God to Jesus Christ, as from Christ to John. God is considered as having this knowledge in himself. This he communicates to Jesus Christ. Christ communicates it to his Angel. And his Angel communicates it to John.

In reference to Christ, John the baptist says, “He, whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.”† If the Spirit, as here used, mean any thing, it means inspiration ; for it is that, which enabled Christ *to speak the words of God*. And since it is declared to be *without measure*, it fairly accounts for all that he ever said or did, without the strange supposition of his being the infinite, eternal, and independent God.

Finally—*Let this same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus ; who, being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation*—Here it should be remarked, that the word, which our translators have rendered *equal*, is used adverbially, and signifies *resemblance, similarity, or likeness*. It is not *ισον* but *ισα*.† This part of the passage should be rendered thus, *Who being in the form of God, (or of a God) was not tenacious of his godlike station, (or did not greedily seize on the opportunity of being like a God ;) on the contrary, he made himself empty (in this respect) and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and become obedient unto death, even*

* Rev. i. 1.—† John, iii. 34.

† When our Lord says, concerning the children of the resurrection, *ισαγγελοι γαρ υιοι* Luke, xx. 36, we do not suppose they are really *equal* unto the angels ; much less that they are *identically the same beings*.

*the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at (or in) the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven, and of those in earth, and those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** How came Christ by his high exaltation? This passage declares **GOD HATH HIGHLY EXALTED HIM.** Whence his dignity, illustrious titles, and lordship over all? This passage declares **GOD HATH GIVEN HIM A NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME.** Is he to be respected as the great Supreme? This passage declares, that the honor, paid to him, is *to respect ultimately* **THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.**

* Phil. ii. 6-11.

SECTION V.

BOTH Christ and his apostles declare the *superiority of the Father*, in such a manner as to render it evident, that Christ is a **DISTINCT** and **DEPENDENT BEING**.

*My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all.**

This is urged as a reason, why none should be able to pluck his disciples from him and cause them to perish. Here, then, is a *donor* and a *receiver*; which, in the nature of things, can never be the same being. The Father gives Christ's sheep into his hands. He is greater than all. Therefore no one shall be able to pluck them out of the hands of the Son. To suppose the Father is not essentially more mighty than Christ, as well as all other beings, is to destroy the force of the argument.

"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father for my Father is greater than I."† The consideration, of the superiority of the Father, is urged as ground of joy to affectionate disciples, upon the information that Christ is about to leave them, and go unto the Father. Wherefore? The reason assigned, in the context, is, that they should then be endowed with the Spirit of inspiration and miracles, which would give them to understand the whole of that system of divine truth, many important parts of which, though he used the very plainest language, he could not himself, on account of the deep rooted prejudices of education, instill into their minds. But, going unto the Father and receiving the reward of his humiliation, he should then be able to confer upon them the Spirit; which would enlighten their minds into a just conception of all truth, and enable them, in confirmation of this truth preached by them to the world, to exceed any wonderful works, which he himself had performed. It is plain, from the latter part of the thirteenth chapter, from many things in this, and from

* John, x. 29.—† John, xiv. 28.

chapter the sixteenth, all of which are but one discourse, that, by his going unto the Father, he had reference to his receiving the reward of his sufferings ; to wit, that glorious exaltation to be head over all things to the church, which would enable him to send, unto them the Comforter, for their own illumination and the illumination of the world. This he was not, at that time able to bestow upon them ; for he was not, then, glorified by the Father. The completion of that meritorious work, which entitled him to this reward, required his death. Hence he says, “ It is expedient for you that I go away ; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you ;” the meaning of which we have stated above. We hence learn, that, by the declaration, *My Father is greater than I*, our Lord acknowledges his own essential impotency, as to the gift of the Spirit, and that he is dependent upon the Father to enable him to bestow it upon his disciples.

“ And ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.* In view of this representation, it may as well be affirmed, that believers are not distinct beings from Christ, as that Christ is not a distinct being from God. Yea, it may as well be affirmed, that believers are not Christ’s property, disciples or servants, as that Christ is not God’s property, disciple, or servant. It plainly asserts, that whatever believers are to Christ, that Christ is to God.

But I would have you to know that the head of every man is Christ ; and the head of the woman is the man ; and the head of Christ is God.† This is an idea, that he would impress upon their minds. He would have them rest assured of it, as a matter of absolute fact, that, not only is man the head of the woman, and Christ the head of the man ; but *God is the head of Christ*. What stronger evidence can be had of any thing asserted in scripture, than is here afforded, that Christ is a distinct being from God, and a subject of the divine government ?

* I Cor. iii. 23.—† I Cor. xi. 3.

WE come, now, to a very memorable passage, which embraces the whole economy of Christ's exaltation, and which states minutely the duration and issue of it.—“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death. For he hath put all things under him. But, when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And, when all things shall be subdued under him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”* In this passage the following things are worthy of observation.

1. The Son is spoken of under his highest designation. This the most eminent advocates of his deity are compelled to acknowledge; for he is spoken of in the capacity of ruling and governing all things, and subjecting every thing to his dominion, excepting the infinite God: Which they say is beyond the power of a creature to perform.

2. He is represented as a distinct being from God.—To God he is to deliver up the kingdom, and God is excepted from the number of beings to be subjected to him; which manifests that God is as distinct a being from him, as those not excepted. Indeed if he were not thus distinguished, there would be no propriety in making the exception.

3. The extraordinary powers, by which he puts down all rule and authority, and subdues all things to himself, are represented as not inherent, but delegated powers from that God, “who did put all things under him.”

4. Immediately after the subjection of the last enemy, death, the Son is to relinquish the management of the kingdom to God.

5. Then the Son himself is to become a subject to him, who did put all things under him. The meaning of this plainly is, that the Son shall then descend from

* I Cor. xv. 24—28.

his exalted state of authority. He shall no longer be the ostensible governor, vicegerent; or medium through whom God rules and manages all things; but shall appear in his own natural rank, without any authority over his fellow subjects; and God shall govern without any vicegerent.

The whole of the above account coincides, perfectly, with our scheme of sentiment; and is directly in the face of the sentiment of our opponents. According to their scheme the Son humbles himself to become Mediator; and is as mediator, inferior to the Father. Upon the conclusion of the mediatorial work, then, he must *rise to his former station*, and take equal rank with the Father. But this passage represents that he is *to take a lower station than he now has*, and to become subject to him, who put all things under him.

Besides, how can the Son, as mediator, become subject when he ceases to hold that character? What is it that is to be subject, if not the second person in the Trinity?

Further. Our opponents suppose that, when the economy of redemption is finished, the mediator is to deliver up the kingdom into the hand of God; that is, of the three persons jointly, between whom there will no longer be any economical subordination. But this passage asserts, that it is to be delivered into the hands of God the Father, *the first person*; who is here represented as having put all things under him. So that the Son and the Holy Ghost will not hold a rank equal to the Fathers.

Moreover, as no one is excepted from subjection to the mediatorial Son, but he who did put all things under him, which is the Father from whom the Son received the kingdom, and to whom he delivers it up, it is plain, that the Holy Ghost is not excepted, and must be one who is subjected to the Son. And as the Son is to give all that government which he received, into the hands of the Father, he must give the government over the Holy Ghost into his hands, so that at the conclusion of the economy of redemption the Holy Ghost will still be under

the rule of the Father : Contrary to their doctrine on this subject.

Finally, If the Son is to deliver up the kingdom to the three persons jointly considered, then he must deliver up the kingdom to himself, he being one of these persons.

The Apostle, it is evident, was no Trinitarian. We know indeed our opponents pretend, that the "*Father*" sometimes means *the Son* and *the Holy Ghost* : So that, when the Apostle says, the Son is to deliver up the kingdom to *God, even the Father*, he means *the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*. Thus will they have terms, even explanatory terms, to mean any thing and every thing, just as their scheme may require. But, with us, the plain declaration of the inspired Apostle is sufficient authority.

Thus evident is it, that both Christ and the Apostles declare *the superiority of the Father*, in such manner as to render it plain, that *Christ is a distinct and dependent being*.

SECTION VI.

THE scriptures speak of another Being, as THE GOD OF JESUS CHRIST; not the God *of a part of him*, but *of HIS WHOLE PERSON*. They make this representation, in unqualified language, just as they speak of the God of Paul and of others. “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?”* “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God.”† The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed forever more, knoweth that I lie not.”‡ “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom.”§ “Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed, thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”¶ “And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.”** “Lo I come to do thy will, O my God.”†† “Him that overcometh says Christ, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which cometh down out of heaven from my God.”‡‡

It is hence evident, that prophets, and Apostles, and Christ himself, all declare God to be HIS GOD. In no instance do they represent, that God is the God of a *part of him only*, of a supposed *impersonal nature*. We never hear them declaring, that he is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ *as to the flesh*; or any thing of the kind, by which it can be inferred, that he is God over him only in a partic-

* Mat. xxvii. 46.—† John, xx. 17.—‡ II Cor. xi. 31.—§ Eph. i. 3. 17. § Heb. i. 9.—** Micah, v. 4.—This passage is a complete refutation of the argument, generally deduced from the declaration, that God will not give his glory to another. It is here declared, that he allows another to stand and feed both in the strength of Jehovah, and in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

†† Psalms, xl. 8.—‡‡ Rev. iii. 12.

ular view. But they evidently assert, in plain and unqualified language, that the Father is *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*. They assert this precisely in the same manner, as they do that he is *the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*. Yea they assert, that he is the God of Christ as OUR LORD. And what can be more decisive proof, that Christ himself is not the supreme God? Is Christ the God of Christ! Or is God the God of himself! Or are there two supreme, selfexistent, and independent Gods, one of whom is the God of the other!

The idea of a supreme God above us is, that he is our Creator, Preserver, the Author of all that we are, and of all that we possess. The inspired scriptures, by declaring that the supreme Father **IS THE GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**, affirm, in the most striking and pointed manner, that Jesus Christ is not a selfexistent, independent being; that he is not the supreme God. In what manner is it possible, that his supreme and independent divinity should be, more fully and definitely, denied?

SECTION VII.

THE doctrine, that Christ is, literally, **THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN**, as is held by our opponents, is wholly against the idea of his being the only living and true God.

In a controversy, there are always two opposing parties. A mediator, is one who steps in, and undertakes to produce a reconciliation between them. He is not himself one of the parties, but a distinct impartial being, who will be a righteous umpire in the cause. The idea, that the Mediator is one of the contending parties, is as absurd, as that there is a controversy where there is but *one* being. A mediator is always a *third man*, who stands between the opponents. If therefore Christ be, literally speaking, a Mediator in the controversy between God and sinful men, as our opponents contend, he can neither be one of those sinners, who are engaged in the controversy ; nor that God, between whom and sinful men he undertakes to mediate. But the absurdity of their doctrine on this head, will, if possible, be more fully manifest, when we consider their scheme of the covenant of redemption,

SECTION VIII.

THE commonly received doctrine, of three literal persons in the Godhead, IS WITHOUT FOUNDATION IN SCRIPTURE ; and is, moreover, A DEMONSTRABLE ABSURDITY.

The doctrine is as follows. *There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, strictly and literally capable of acting distinct or separate parts ; of covenanting and contracting ; of assuming different offices ; accomplishing different transactions ; coequal and coeternal ; the Father is not the Word, nor either of these the Holy Ghost ; and yet there is, numerically, but one God, one being, one consciousness, one infinite intelligence, will, power, wisdom, &c.*

That the scriptures, by each of the terms Father, Word, and Holy Ghost, spirit or spirit of God, designate the only living and true God, we do not hesitate to acknowledge, but firmly believe. That they teach, however, a trinity of persons in this God, as stated above, we deny. Our reasons are,

1. This doctrine is inconceivable by the human mind, not merely as to the *mode*, but as to the *fact*. The human mind cannot think of distinct literal persons, and, at the same time, maintain in its conception or idea, that these persons are, numerically, but one single being.—There is nothing within the compass of nature, experience, or observation, which illustrates the doctrine, or by which it can be illustrated. There is, therefore, no possible ground of its conception by the human mind ; all its ideas being derived from the sources mentioned. This is certainly the case, if the word, person, when applied to the Trinity has the same meaning, as when applied to any other than God. If it have not this meaning, but something which cannot be defined or pointed out, then also the proposition, which contains the doctrine, must

be unintelligible. In either case the mind must be incapable of conceiving of it, as a doctrine of truth. It is therefore a doctrine, which is not, and cannot be revealed to capacities like ours; for the very idea of *revealing is to make known to the mind, or to communicate something to the understanding*, of which it had no conception before. The cry of MYSTERY here, is but a miserable shift. To pretend that an *unknowable something is revealed*, as an article of *belief*, of which the human mind neither *does* nor *can form an idea or conception*, is infinitely absurd. The ideas or conceptions of the mind are definite. To suppose the mind does or can receive a doctrine, of which it forms no particular idea, is to suppose that man might as well believe without intelligent understanding as with it. What if an angel were inspired to propose ABRACADABRA to mankind, as an article of faith. Could any man believe what conveys no ideas to his mind? Or would it be any more a matter of his *faith*, a something *which he really believes a fact in his mind*, because the angel declares it to be an IN-SCRUTABLE MYSTERY? Should the angel reduce this unknown tongue to English, and say, that, by the three first syllables, is asserted that God is three distinct rational beings, and, by the two last, that these beings are but one person; would this be a doctrine revealed, as a matter of truth, to our minds? A mystery, which we could be said to believe? If the terms, *being* and *person*, and *three* and *one*, be taken in their common sense, the proposition would be an absurdity, to which the mind could not assent as a matter of fact: For there is nothing, within the compass of nature, which is of this description; or by which it can be illustrated, as a consistent truth. The mind could indeed believe, that there are three beings. It would also believe, that there is such a thing as a person. But it could not believe, *even upon the authority of miracles*, that three rational beings are but one person; meaning one in number.

Why not? Where is the contradiction and absurdity in the view of the mind? Does the proposition say, that

one person is three persons, or that three beings are but one being?

It does not say it in words, but according to the mind's understanding of terms, it says this *in idea*. It is evident therefore, that the doctrine could not be revealed to capacities like ours.

Suppose then the proposition mean something different from what these terms ever suggest, when applied to men. Suppose it mean *ABRACADABRA*; three beings in one person, in a sense which is no contradiction, though altogether beyond our finite understandings; which sense, of course, we can neither define nor explain: What can it be said, in this case, that we believe about it? Affixing no definite meaning to the terms, it is plain, that we believe nothing at all of it as an article of creed, a doctrine which we receive. If it be a true doctrine, yet as we do not and cannot understand it; as there is nothing by which it can be illustrated to the human mind; it is wholly incapable of being revealed to capacities like ours. No man can be said to *believe* it, seeing it is impossible for *faith to outrun ideas*.

The doctrine of the numerical unity of the being of the three persons, said to be believed by our opponents, is evidently a twin brother of what we have stated above, and could not be revealed, as an article of faith, to human understandings. It cannot, therefore be a doctrine of the scriptures.

2. ACCORDINGLY it is nowhere asserted in the scriptures, that there are three literal persons in the Deity; neither does the mode of argument, which our opponents use in proof of the unity of the being of Father, Word and Spirit, admit of this conclusion.

Even that famous passage, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one** does by no means establish the doctrine. For it no more asserts that the Father, the Word and the Spirit are three distinct and literal persons in one being, than the passage following asserts, that the

* 1 John, v. 7.

three witness on earth are such ; to wit "*the water, the spirit and the blood.*" And the unity spoken of, if it be any thing to the point, cannot be intended an unity of being, but an unity of testimony. If any one doubts whether this passage be an interpolation, let him read Michaelis, and the no less learned Porson *vs* Travis. The Editors of the London Evangelical Magazine, by quoting Michaelis with approbation, in his rejection of this passage, have acknowledged it to be an interpolation. There is not indeed, among the learned in Europe at this time, any pretension to the contrary. It is granted on all hands, that John never wrote the passage.

We give a summary statement concerning this passage in the language of Christie. "The words in parenthesis (*in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth*) have been fully proved by many able writers to be *spurious*, and Father Simon, Dr. Hall, Professor Michaelis, and other learned Trinitarians, have *acknowledged* them to be so. They are wanting in all the Greek manuscripts, excepting two, which are of no authority. They are not quoted by any of the Greek Fathers, in any work which is allowed to be genuine, although some of them quote the verse immediately *before* and *after*. Nor do any of the Latin Fathers quote this text for several centuries after Christ. During the time of the Arian controversy, this text was never produced, although the bible was *ransacked*, and many passages, far less to the purpose, were urged as proofs of the divinity of Christ. These words are wanting in the *Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic*, and *Arminian* versions, and although they are in the *Latin Vulgate*, yet many manuscripts of that version also want them. *Luther* and *Bullinger* omitted them in their translations of the German Bible at the time of the reformation ; and in the English Bibles in the reigns of *Henry* the eighth, and *Edward* the sixth, they were either printed in a different character, or separated by a parenthesis, or both ; as also in one edition in the reign of *Queen Elizabeth*. This passage was left out in several famous editions of the Greek Tes-

tament, printed about the time of the reformation, viz. in the first and second of *Erasmus*, in one of *Aldus*, those of *Wolfius*, *Cephalius*, and *Colineus*, and one printed at *Hagenau*, and another at *Strasburg*, and several Dutch editions which followed them. And *Harwood* and *Griesbach*, in their late editions of the New Testament, have also omitted them." In favor of the genuineness of this passage have been alleged—the authority of two Greek MSS.—the testimonies of *Tertulian*, *Cyprian*, and *Jerome*;—some spurious works in Greek, and *Victor Vitensis*, and *Vigilius Thapsensis*, &c. who lived about the end of the fifth century. As to the two Greek MSS. the one of them hardly deserves to be called a MS. being a mere copy of the *Complutense* edition even to the errors of the press, written since the invention of printing; and is lodged in the King of Prussia's library at *Berlin*: And the other which belongs to the university of *Dublin*, is, in the opinion of the best judges, a mere modern MS. of no value or accuracy." (It is certainly not earlier than the fifteenth century.) "*Tertulian* does not allude to this passage at all, but only gives his own sentiments, and refers to John, x. 30; which he never would have done had this passage been extant in his time. The words of *Cyprian*, as we are assured from the Testament of *Eucharius* and *Facundus*, are only a mystical interpretation of the 8th verse which prevailed in the African church: And the preface which has been ascribed to *Jerome*, in which this text is mentioned and asserted to have been restored by him, has been itself proved to be spurious. Works confessedly counterfeited, are of no authority to establish the genuineness of any passage. And the testimonies of *Victor Vitensis* and other Latin writers in the end of the fifth century, are too late in time to be regarded. In short from the universal consent of the Greek MSS. the silence of all the Greek, and the earliest Latin writers, the omission of this place in all the ancient versions (the *Vulgate* excepted, which is divided in regard to it) there is no doubt, but that the words included in the parenthesis above, have been either *willingly* or *ignorantly*, thrust into the

sacred text ; and they ought, therefore to be *erased* from our bibles, that they may no longer deceive the ignorant ; who, in this place, as well as some others, read the words of men instead of the words of God.”*

“ It has been asserted, that the sense of the Apostle is not perfect, without these words. But on the contrary, this interpolation rather darkens the tenor of the Apostle’s discourse, and breaks its connexion. What occasion is there for witnesses in *heaven* ? The Messiahship of Jesus is unquestionably admitted *there*. The Spirit is also made a witness both in *heaven* and *earth*, which reduces the six witnesses to five, and is inconsistent even with the interpolation itself. But when the passage is read according to the Greek MSS. the sense is quite regular and clear, and runs in the following manner, verse 6. *This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ ; not by water only but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood : And these three agree in one ; viz. one testimony, that Jesus is the Son of God.* Some understand by the *water* and the *blood*, the blood and water that came from the side of our Lord when he was pierced upon the cross ; but others more properly refer the *water* to the baptism of Jesus when he was declared by a voice from heaven to be the beloved Son of God : Or to the spotless purity and innocence of the life and character of our Lord, compared to water on that account : And the *blood* to his death and resurrection, by which he was declared or defined to be the Son of God with power. The *Spirit* evidently relates to the miracles performed by Christ and his Apostles, and the supernatural gifts bestowed upon them ; by which our Lord’s

* It was for some time imagined that seven of *Stephen’s* MSS. had this passage ; but on a stricter scrutiny it has been found, that these seven want the first epistle of John altogether. The above is a brief but just account of this passage and the reasons for rejecting it. The subject is discussed at large in *Mill*, *Wetstein*, and *Griesbach* in loco. In *Sir Isaac Newton’s* Letters to *Le Clerk*, *Dr. Benson’s* dissertation : In *Mr. Emlyn’s* full inquiry into this text, and his defence of that inquiry in reply to *Mr. Martin* :—and finally in *Person’s* letters to *Travis*, which have settled the controversy.

divine mission and Sonship, were ascertained to the world. So that all these three witnesses concur in *one testimony*. And St. John adds with great propriety, verse, 9. *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater ; for this is the witness, of God, which he hath testified of his Son.* If we admit the testimony or evidence of two or three persons of veracity to establish the truth of any fact, ought we not much rather to admit the testimony, that God has given in behalf of his Son, particularly the miraculous works and gifts, which, being performed by the spirit or power of God, may be called the very witness or evidence of God *himself*.”*

NOR is the doctrine of the Trinity proved by the direction of our Lord, *Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost*. The preposition rendered *in*, should be rendered *into*. It is *into*, not *in*. “Baptizing them *into* the name of the Father, &c.” It is worthy of remark, that the word, *name*, is not always a term by which a person is designated. It is used in a great variety of senses. Cruden, in his concordance, adduces examples of *eleven* significations, which this word has, when applied to God : Of *three*, when applied to Christ ; and of *eight*, when applied to men. The true sense of the above passage depends, therefore, very much upon the meaning of the word, *name*. Now to baptize into any thing, is to baptize into a profession or acknowledgment of that thing. When the Israelites were baptized into Moses, they were baptized into a profession or acknowledgment of his divine commission to lead them into the promised land. When the disciples were baptized by John, they were baptized into a belief or profession of Christ, about to come. And what is christian baptism, but to baptize *into a profession of the christian religion*. When an infidel becomes converted to the christian faith, into what is he baptized ? Is he baptized merely into a belief and profession of the doctrine of the Trinity ? Unquestionably he is baptized into a profession of the christian religion ; that heavenly system of faith and practice, which originated in God the

* Christie's Discourses in loco.

Father, which was published by Christ his Son and Apostle, and which was confirmed by miracles. He is no more baptized into a profession of one particular doctrine, than any other. He is baptized into a profession and acceptance of christianity at large. By the word *name*, then, into which he is baptized, is meant *religion*. He is baptized into the *religion* of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Accordingly this is one meaning of the word *name* in the scriptures. Hence our Lord says to his disciples, *Ye shall be hated of all men for my NAME's sake ;** i. e. on account of my *religion*. But he declares for their encouragement, *Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren or sisters, or Father or Mother, or wife or children, or lands for my NAME's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*† The Apostles and early christians forsook these things, for the sake of the *christian religion*. To the church of Pergamos our Lord says, *Thou holdest fast my NAME, and hast not denied my faith.*‡ Here the word *name* is explained, by our Saviour himself, to be *the christian faith or religion*. This church had been baptized into the name of Christ. They adhered to their profession. They persevered in *christianity*. Again it is said, *Barnabas and Paul have hazarded their lives for the NAME of the Lord Jesus Christ :*|| Which certainly can mean nothing else, than that they did this on account of his *religion*. In the same sense the word *name* is used, when Paul says, *I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the NAME of Jesus of Nazareth ;*§ which, he declares, he actually did, by persecuting those, who maintained and propagated Christ's *religion*. In his second letter to Timothy the Apostle exhorts, *Let every one that nameth the NAME of Christ depart from iniquity.*¶ i. e. every one who professeth his *religion*. Peter, to encourage christians under their persecutions, says, *If ye be reproached for the NAME of Christ, (the christian religion) happy are ye.***

The name of God, also, is often used for the *religion* of God. Hence the Apostle tells the profligate Jews at

* Matt. x. 22. — † Chap. xix. 29. — ‡ Rev. ii. 13. — § Acta, xv. 26. —
¶ Chap. xxvi. 9. — ¶ II Tim. ii. 19. — ** I Pet. iv. 14.

Rome, *The NAME of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you* : * i. e. your unhallowed conduct brings reproach upon his *religion*, and prevents its progress. Our Saviour uses the word in this sense, when, in prayer to the Father, he says, *O Righteous Father, I have declared unto them (my disciples) thy NAME, and will declare it.*† Christ taught the disciples the *religion* of the Father. Paul in his direction to believing servants, says, *Let as many servants as are under the christian yoke count their own (heathen) masters worthy of all honor, that the NAME of God, και ἡ διδασκαλία even his RELIGION be not blasphemed.*‡

It is needless to adduce any more examples to this point. The word, name, in the passage, before us, has unquestionably this signification. In this sense the Apostles themselves understood it in the commission, which they received from Christ to baptize. They understood him to say, “Go disciple all nations to my religion ; to that religion, which originated in God the supreme Father, which is published to man through the medium of the Son of God, and which is confirmed by the Holy Ghost, or by miraculous powers and attestations, to be truly divine. Here are not three religions, but one only. The religion of the Father is the religion of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. My doctrine is not mine but his that sent me.” In this light the Apostles understood their commission. Hence we never find them making use of the particular words, now the common form of baptism, but baptizing *into the name of the Lord Jesus* only : Into a profession of *christianity*, in distinction from Judaism on the one hand, and Heathenism on the other.

Nor is baptism, as is affirmed by some, “a solemn act of worship.” It is merely a rite or ceremony, denoting spiritual purification. As well might it be pretended that circumcision, which was of precisely the same import, was an act of solemn worship. We know indeed, that baptism is accompanied by worship at the present day : That a prayer is generally made, both before and after the administration of the ordinance. This custom,

* Rom. ii. 24. —† John, xvii. 26. —‡ I Tim. vi. 1.

however, is not sanctioned either by divine precept, or by the example of the Apostles.

Further; it is said by our opponents, that to join Jesus Christ, in so solemn an act, with God the Father, would be impiety, if he were not coequal and consubstantial with him.

To this we reply. It does not appear that the Apostles ever administered the ordinance of baptism by saying "I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," according to the practice of the present day. The historian of the Apostles says nothing more, than that they *baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus*. Probably their manner was, *I baptize thee into the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*. Be this as it may, there is no impiety in joining God and the creature together in representations of this kind. It is a very common practice with the sacred writers. It is said, "All the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel."* "The people feared the Lord and his servant Moses."† "All the congregation bowed down their heads and worshipped the Lord (*Jehovah*) and the king (*Solomon*)."‡ "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels" &c.§ The last is a solemn adjuration. The one immediately preceeding is an act of worship. Are the inspired penmen to be charged with impiety for thus connecting, in their representations, God and the creature? Or will any one dare to say, that this representation is calculated to lead the unprejudiced inquirer after the truth to believe, that the creature and the Creator are one and the same being?

On the whole: This passage concerning baptism, is very far from being an argument in favor of a trinity of persons in God; for it has no relation to the subject. It must be proved from another quarter, that the Spirit is literally a distinct person, and that the Son is the same infinite Being with the Father.

WE would however observe, that the scriptures explain and assert not only the term Father, but also the

* I Sam. xii. 18.—† Exod. xiv. 31.—‡ I Chron. xxix. 20.—§ I Tim. v. 21.

terms Word and Spirit or Holy Ghost, to mean the only true God. And what is the conclusion from this ? Not that they designate different persons, but the same person. The scripture sometimes commands men to circumcise the foreskins of their heart ; at others to cleanse themselves from all iniquity ; at others to put off the old man ; at others to crucify the flesh ; and all these things it reduces to the command of loving the Lord with all the heart, strength and understanding. But are we hence to conclude, that these variously expressed commands require distinct and different performances, the whole of which united amount to Love ? The just conclusion is, that they represent the same thing in different points of light only, in accommodation to the human understanding. Had the scriptures asserted, that these three terms indicate three distinct persons in God, it would be quite another thing. But, as they do not, the conclusion, from the application of these three different epithets to God, is, that they represent him to us in those different points of light only, which are illustrated by the natural meaning of the terms.

By the term *Father*, God is represented the fountain of being, the ruler and guardian of his people, and the source of their felicity.

By the term *Word*, he is represented revealing himself, displaying his attributes, and making known his will to mankind, as by our words we communicate ourselves to others, our thoughts, purposes and will. Very often this term signifies his *speech, command, and wisdom*.

The term *Spirit*, signifies *breath and wind* ; and, by an easy metaphor, *secret, unseen, influence, energy, or power*. Hence, this term represents God to us as energizing all things. Sometimes it signifies only *divine power* in the abstract. When the term, *holy*, is annexed, it many times denotes divine influence, concerned in the work of redemption ; either inspiring Prophets and Apostles with salutary doctrine ; or attesting the truth revealed, by miraculous operations ; or furnishing ministers with such gifts and graces, as qualify them for their work ; or sub-

jecting an apostate world to the duties and religion of the gospel.

Sometimes the scriptures *personify* the Word and Holy Ghost. The Word is represented as a person, subject to the Father, and sent unto the prophets, commanding them to speak thus and so to the people : The plain meaning of which, when stripped of the figure, is, that the Great Supreme inspires his prophets to proclaim himself, his mind, and will to mankind.

Our Savior promises to send to his disciples the Holy Spirit, or Comforter, who should tell them all things, and bring every thing, which he had spoken, to their remembrance and understanding : The plain meaning of which, stripped of its figure, is, that he would, when exalted to universal dominion, inspire them with correct ideas of the whole system of divine truth ; make them to understand aright those things, which he could not then explain to their apprehensions, and which they accounted to be hard sayings ; and also furnish them with such miraculous gifts, as would qualify them to become teachers of his heavenly doctrine with success. To this interpretation it can be no objection, that the Spirit or Holy Ghost has ascribed to it all the properties and attributes of a real person, such as change of place, power, knowledge, understanding, will, &c. For the very idea, of the figure of personification, is, to represent the thing personified, as though it were really and truly a person. Hence charity is represented as exercising patience, being free from envy, modest, unassuming, acting with discretion, not selfish, but benevolent, commanding her passions, meditating no evil to others, taking no satisfaction in iniquity, joyfully embracing the truth, submitting to divine providence, or patiently bearing injuries at the hand of her fellow men, exercising faith, hope, and forbearance.* Charity, in itself, is merely an exercise of the human heart. But, when this virtue is personified, she is represented as an acting character, an intelligent being, with understanding, will, and affections ; nay, soul and body, with all that belongs to a real person.

* 1 Cor. 13.

We must expect, therefore, that, when the powers of the divine nature, or the different exhibitions of God are personified, they will have attributed to them every thing which belongs to a real personality. This is the very idea of the figure of personification. And it is easy, natural, yea, according with the conception of common christians, untrammelled by an imposing theory, to understand this doctrine in the manner we have stated. So far as we have conversed with the good Mothers in Israel; who have been long before us in Christ, or with common christians in general, we find this to be actually the case, whenever they lay aside their catechism and talk in the plain language of their own ideas. However it may be received, by high Trinitarians; it is no matter of hesitation with us to say, that we doubt not but more than three fourths of the best disciples in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, are really with us in sentiment, though it be the fashion to subscribe to Trinitarian creeds; which, however, they neither understand nor construe, as do their theoretic teachers.

When common christians pray to the Father of mercies, that he would send down his holy spirit to convert their family and neighbors from unbelief, and lead them to a cordial reception of the gospel, they think nothing of a distinction of personalities. All they mean is, that the great God, to whom they pray, would put forth divine influence and make these sinners the willing subjects of his grace. So also when they pray, that he would send forth his Word, to teach them the things of God, what is meant is, that God would enlighten their minds with a just understanding of the doctrines and duties of piety. Indeed we very much scruple, whether the most rigid Trinitarian, in serious and devout prayer to God in his closet means any thing more or less, by the Spirit and the Word, than what we have stated. It was a consideration of what we meant, by addressing the Deity in this phraseology, that first started our mind on this subject, and led us to its investigation. Whether right or wrong, we found we could never go seriously into the presence of the ONE only living God, and carry with us the Trin-

itarian creed, for which, in theory, we had always contended.

Further : It is very common with the scriptures to personify attributes and properties of beings. But a real person is never spoken of as an attribute either, of himself or another. This would be a description in the highest degree absurd. It is very certain, however, that the Spirit of God is often represented the attribute of *divine power*. *If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.** Another evangelist states it thus ; *If I by the finger of God, cast out demons no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.†* That, which Matthew calls the *spirit of God*, Luke calls the *finger of God*. Finger is a word used to denote *power*. Thus the magicians of Egypt confess, respecting the miracles wrought by Moses, “ *This is the finger of God ;*” that is, an expression of *divine power*. Now if the spirit of God be a proper name, denoting a real and distinct personality in the Godhead, then it is plain, that Luke deprives him of his personality, and represents him to us as a *mere attribute*, either of himself or of the Father ; to wit, *divine power*. But as this is insupportable, on account of the singularity and absurdity of such a representation, this instance of scripture affords decisive evidence, that the spirit of God is not really and literally a person, distinct from the Father, but the *divine energy or influence only* ; and that, whenever it is spoken of as a person, it is thus represented by way of figure. Numerous other instances of this kind occur in various parts of the scriptures ; no doubt to prevent us from being led astray by personal representations in other places. But it is unnecessary to adduce any thing further to this point, seeing one plain example is as good as a thousand.

To this we may summarily add the following considerations.

1. The word, *πνευμα* in Greek, rendered Spirit, or Ghost, and the adjective, *αγιον* agreeing with it, are of the *neuter gender* ; whereas all names of persons are, in-

* Matt. xiii. 28.—† Luke, xi. 20.

variably, of a *different gender*. Accordingly this is the case with the Spirit, when personified under the name of Comforter *ὁ παρακλητος*.

2. There is no address, no prayer, no doxology to the Spirit in scripture ; which undoubtedly would have been the case, if the Spirit were really a person.

3. It is contrary to the divine *unity* to consider the Spirit a person, as we shall demonstrate presently.

LET us now attend to the mode of argument, used by Trinitarians, to prove that the terms Father, Word, and Spirit designate one and the same divine Being. They find in the scriptures, that the Father, Word, and Spirit are, each of them, styled God, and that the creation of the world and the same divine attributes are ascribed to each. They hence conclude, that Father, Word, and Spirit must be numerically the same being, the one and only God. The conclusion is just. The explanation of each of these terms by the term, *God*, and a predication of *identically the same actions, works, and attributes* of each of the three names, is undeniable proof, that they designate identically the same being. The obvious reason is, that identity of actions and attributes cannot be predicated of distinct and numerically different things. For instance : The particular action of a particular being, in creating the world, cannot be the action of another being, from whom he is distinct. One being may perform an action *similar* to the action of another being ; but he cannot perform numerically the same action.

Moreover ; one being may possess attributes very similar to those of another being ; but he cannot possess identically the same attributes : For, by distinction of attributes and actions only, do we conclude a distinction of being.

Now this mode of argument as decidedly proves, that the Father, Word, Spirit, are *numerically one person only*, as it does the unity of their being. God is a divine being and person. The terms Father, Word and Spirit are, each of them, explained by the term God.

Therefore, Father, Word, and Spirit are terms descriptive of that divine being and person.

Again, The divine being and person, described by the term God, created the world. But creation is the work of Father, Word, and Spirit. Therefore, Father, Word, and Spirit are terms descriptive of that divine being and person.

Further : This divine being and person has certain peculiar attributes, or properties of his nature. But these identical attributes are ascribed to Father, Word, and Spirit. Therefore, Father, Word, and Spirit cannot be different beings and persons ; but identically the same being and person.

This argument, respecting personality, is the very same with that, respecting being. There is no shadow of difference. It is also grounded on the same obvious principle, to wit, that the particular attributes and actions of one person cannot be the particular attributes and actions of another person numerically different. The argument of our opponents, to prove, *the unity of the being* of the Father, Word, and Spirit, is, therefore, directly and pointedly, in the face of their conclusion, that they are really and numerically *distinct personalities*. If it prove identity of being, it proves also identity of person.

WE now proceed to substantiate our declaration, that the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in Deity, as held by our opponents, is absurd and contradictory.

The doctrine supposes three, literal, distinct persons, in numerical unity of existence and attributes. By a *person*, we all understand a being of certain peculiar qualities or properties, which distinguish him from such as are not personal beings ; or, in other words, a person is a being belonging to the order of rational intelligence. A stone is a being, and so is a horse. But neither of these is a person. Of personal beings we know of but three orders ; divine, angelic, and human. These receive the appellation of personal beings, because they are distinguished from all other descriptions of existences by the possession of rational and moral powers. The idea of a

person, therefore, is always of a being of intelligent and moral powers. A being of this description is always a person, and a person is always such a being.

If this be true, then distinction of such being necessarily implies distinction of person. And distinction of person necessarily implies distinction of such being.—The former no one will dispute. Why call in question the latter? If distinction of such being always imply a distinction of person, and, a person mean a being of that particular description; then, surely, a distinction of the one must be a distinction of the other. In other words, if one person be one such being, then two persons must be *more than one* such being; they must be *two* such beings. In short a person and such being must be synonymous terms, conveying precisely the same idea to the mind.

Will our opponents say, that, though it be so with men and angels, yet is not so with God? That in him there are three distinct persons, each having the divine attributes in common with the others? This is what they say; and it destroys the true and only idea which distinction of person conveys to the mind. It is saying, that, by distinction of person, and consequently person itself, is not meant the same thing, when predicated of Deity, as when predicated of other rational and moral intelligences. The plain English of this is, "We acknowledge, that our doctrine is not true. We use words without ideas. 'Our trinity is not a trinity of real and literal *persons*.'" Would our brethren speak out plainly, they would adopt the language above. But they will not make this candid confession. They still contend, that the term, person, has meaning. But the mode of divine existence, say they, is very different, in this particular from ours; and he may be three distinct persons in one being, though this be impossible with men. *Who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty to perfection?* His nature is all mysterious. And to say, he cannot be three persons in one being, is to reduce the infinite One to the standard of man, and to make the great God altogether such as ourselves.

To all this it would be sufficient to adopt the reply of Job to his miserable comforters, when they adduced the same argument against him. *No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.** Our opponents, notwithstanding its high and inscrutable mystery, seem to arrogate to themselves the true and proper understanding of it ; for they are so very confident that their own views are accurately just, that they make no hesitation to proscribe, as heretics and unbelievers, all, who cannot traverse this mystery so well, as themselves. It is a pity, however, that defenders of the faith should take pattern so fully after a noted infidel. Bolingbroke, if we do not misremember, charges christians with blasphemy against God, when they affirm, that holiness in God is the same exercise or affection, that is in good men. This, says he, is reducing God to the standard of men, and making the infinite Being altogether such an one as themselves. Bolingbroke says this through a pretended reverence and regard for the honor of God ; while it is his aim to overthrow the christian religion, by setting God so far out of the reach of the human intellect, that it is impossible for us to have any ideas concerning him. And, why is not this noted infidel right ? His argument and that of our opponents is founded on one and the same principle. If the latter be just, so is the former. We may as well affirm, that moral goodness in God, seeing he is an infinite Being, must be different from moral goodness in men, as to affirm this concerning his person : And the outcry of Bolingbroke, against christians, is as much an exhibition of wisdom, as the outcry of our opponents against us.

But is it true, because God is an infinite, selfexistent Being, that virtue, existence, power, rationality, wisdom, knowledge, and person, according to our ideas of them, are something different from these things in God ? If so, men neither do know, nor can they know any thing of their Maker. Yea, it is impossible that God should communicate any just conceptions of himself to finite understandings ; and the christian revelation is, as Bolingbroke would prove, but the forgery of priests.

* Job, xii. 2.

It is melancholy to see my christian brethren verging so closely upon Papal and Infidel ground. Papal or Infidel reasoning, is suspicious; and nothing ought to be received from them, until it be found to stand the test of a thorough examination. Such examination the doctrine before us will not bear.

The senses are the medium of all our ideas. No man can possess ideas different from what are derived through this medium, and from what the things around him are able to illustrate. Hence when we speak of existence in God, we mean the same thing that we do by existence in ourselves and others. When we speak of his independence, we mean what we do, when we speak of one man's being independent of another. The idea of his omnipresence is formed, by extending the idea of our presence in one place to presence in another, and another, and so on *ad infinitum*. The idea of his immutability is the continuance of the idea of what any thing now is, through every period. By his eternity we mean, that, let us fix on any period ever so remote or high in our calculations, we have the idea that he exists in that period, and was in existence before. It is the same idea which we have of the eternity of our existence to come: There is no completing the calculation. The idea of his justice, goodness, mercy, truth, and faithfulness is also founded on the idea of these virtues in ourselves and fellowmen. To talk as though person were something different in God from what we have stated; that is, which does not comport with the idea of person in application to ourselves and fellowmen, is to pretend to hold to a certain something, which something, in our idea is a mere nothing; a thing of which we form no conception, and, concerning which, we can neither think nor talk, unless we think and talk without ideas. And is it really a celestial virtue of the first order to darken counsel by words without knowledge! Shall he, who talks thus of the great Supreme, arrogate all wisdom and piety to himself!

But, after all their outcry against us, distinction of real and literal personalities is evidently intended by our Trinitarian brethren: For their doctrine makes these

persons capable of distinct and separate actions, or of performing distinct and separate parts. They say also, that this is not an accidental, but essential distinction in the Godhead : Consequently that the first person is not the second, nor either of these the third person. It is involved, therefore, in the absurdity of acknowledging distinction of person to be distinction of being, and yet affirming that three distinct persons are no more than one being. This is the same as to say, that three persons are no more in number, than one person : For if the existence and attributes, necessary to constitute one person, be not increased by the addition of the two other persons, then that one person is equal to three combined. Indeed the two additional persons, according to the statement, must be mere nihilities.

But let us pursue the subject a little further. The doctrine states, that the one is not the other. What is meant by *one* ? For instance ; the Father. Does this first person embrace the existence, understanding, power, wisdom, and every attribute of Deity ? This is the creed. They say the same concerning the second and third persons. The assertion, then, that one is not the other, is not true. For the divine existence and attributes are the *first* person. Numerically the same existence and attributes are the *second* person. And numerically the same existence and attributes are the *third* person. Pray, then, what difference or distinction can there be between them ? Certainly none in existence ; none in attributes. But what difference can there be in mere personalities, abstracted from existence and attributes ? Manifestly it cannot be a difference in point of *existence* ; for that is numerically *the same*. Equally manifest is it, that there can be no difference in the *mode* of existence ; for where there is no difference in existence, there can be no difference *as to mode*. Most evident, therefore, they cannot differ at all. Here, then, is another absurdity.

Furthermore. The doctrine states, that they are capable of distinct and separate actions ; or that the actions of the one are not the actions of the other. Neither can

this be true. As numerically the same being, or existence and attributes, is predicable of each one ; it is plain, that every action of that being must be the action of that person, of whom that being is predicated ; consequently, of every one whom that being composes. As neither the Father, nor the Word, nor the Spirit can be separated from that being, which belongs to him, each of them must necessarily act, whenever that being acts ; and the particular action, of that being must invariably be the action of each and every person. Person and being cannot be so separated, as that the one, may lie still while the other is at work. It is evident, therefore, to a demonstration, that the action of the one person must invariably be the action of the other persons.

Thus, in whatever light this doctrine of the Trinity be viewed, it is a gross absurdity and self contradiction. It is impossible, therefore, that it should be contained in the oracles of inspired wisdom. Indeed an important article of this doctrine is expressly contradicted by the scriptures. Reference is had to that, which asserts, that the action of one person is not the action of another.—Trinitarians themselves affirm, in the moments of their forgetfulness, that the action of creating the world is ascribed to the Father, and to the Word, and to the Spirit ; and urge this consideration to prove the supreme deity of each ; yea, that they are the same being. If the scriptures assert this, then they assert, that the action of the one, is the action of the other ; directly in the face of their creed. Other instances, to this point, might be adduced ; particularly the sanctification of sinners, which is ascribed to the Father, the Word, and the Spirit. So that the scriptures deny the essential article of the orthodox creed. I say *essential*. For they contend that each of the three persons holds a distinct office in the affair of man's redemption, so that it belongs to the Word or Son to redeem, and to the Spirit to sanctify, and to the Father to send, and to receive satisfaction ; without which, it is said, that man could not have been saved. But where is the advantage of three persons in the Godhead, seeing the action of the one is necessarily, and declared by the

scriptures to be the action of the other ? One person would answer every purpose as well as more.

But, to go through with the subject, let us consider the Trinitarian covenant of redemption. They suppose a mutual contract or stipulation between the Father, Word or as some will have it, Son and Holy Ghost. The Father sits as supreme. The Word and Holy Ghost take inferior stations. The Father promises the Word great honor and glory on condition he will become incarnate, and die on the cross in behalf of sinners. The Word agrees to be at his command ; and the Holy Ghost promises to be subservient to the Father and the Word, in carrying into effect their designs concerning the redemption of man. Accordingly, the Father sends the Word, or Son into the world, and the Holy Ghost begets his human nature. The Word, or Son, fulfills his stipulation with the Father, obeys in the flesh, and dies on the cross. The Holy Ghost, makes his death effectual, by converting men to the love and obedience of righteousness.— And the Father, according to his promise, exalts the Word, or Son, to be head over all things to the church.

Now what is to be understood by this representation ? Do our brethren mean to talk without ideas ? Or do they mean to advocate the ideas, which the language holds forth ? Either of these suppositions is in face of their doctrine. If they mean this as *mere gibberish of words*, then their doctrine, which professes to be something important, can be nothing more. If they mean what is naturally and necessarily conveyed by the language, it is either rank tritheism, or the very ultimatum of absurdity.

Here is a bargain, a contract, a stipulation, and a correspondent performance. This is done, either by mere abstract personalities, without the consideration of being and attributes ; or by numerical unity of being and attributes. By the former it is obviously impossible to be done : For that, which is abstracted from being and personal properties, can neither be a person, nor capable either of contracting, or of fulfilling a contract. By the very supposition it is destitute of the powers of operation. Upon the plan of merely abstract personalities, the cove-

nant could never have been instituted, nor the conditions of it performed.

The supposition of its being done by the latter, reduces it to the highest jargon. It reads thus:—The divine essence and attributes, (the Father) the divine essence and attributes, (the Word) and the divine essence and attributes, (the Holy Ghost) enter into mutual covenant. The divine essence and attributes sits as supreme. The divine essence and attributes and the divine essence and attributes take inferior stations. The divine essence and attributes promises to the divine essence and attributes great honor and glory, on condition he will become incarnate and die on the cross. The divine essence and attributes agrees to be at his command, and the divine essence and attributes promises to be subservient both to the divine essence and attributes and to the divine essence and attributes, and carry into effect their designs concerning the redemption of man. Accordingly the divine essence and attributes sends the divine essence and attributes into the world; and the divine essence and attributes begets his human nature. The divine essence and attributes fulfils his stipulation with the divine essence and attributes, obeys in the flesh, and dies on the cross. Shall we proceed? Rather let us submit the rest of this jargon story to the faith of all, who can muster patience to read it through. Nothing can be more evident, than that the covenant of redemption, as held by our opponents, is wholly destitute of any meaning or reality. A real covenant can be entered into, and the conditions of it performed only by **DISTINCT BEINGS**. Do away distinction of being, and you render the covenant an absurdity in the very supposition.

THIS doctrine being set aside, the supreme Deity of Christ falls of course. To suppose him still the supreme God, is to suppose him God the Father, the only proper divine person in the universe. And this involves the gross absurdity, that the Father sends himself, obeys himself, prays to himself, uphold himself, rewards himself. It involves the absurdity, that he is Mediator between him-

self and the world. In short, that he is his own God and Father, and, at the same time, his own and only begotten Son!!!

Nor will the doctrine of the preexistence of the human soul of Christ, as held by many divines afford the least relief. They also adhere to the doctrine of the hypostatical union of natures. They, as well as others, deny the Son to be a distinct being and person from the supreme Divinity. They hold that there are two natures in one person. So that this scheme makes no saving at all in the matters of absurdity stated above.

C O N C L U S I O N.

THUS we have given a general view of the important controversy concerning God and Christ. Numerous passages, which are concerned in this question, are indeed omitted on the one side and on the other. It was our design, merely to exhibit a specimen of the testimonies in favor of each. We have, however, avoided no passage, urged by our opponents, which is of more difficult solution, upon our principles, than those already considered in this treatise. The passages and considerations, on which they make the greatest dependence for the support of their doctrine, are brought into view. This, we presume, our opponents themselves will acknowledge. How far we have succeeded in adducing evidence of the error of their doctrine, the public will judge for themselves. If our reply to their arguments, and the direct proof in favor of our opinion, be insufficient, to invalidate the common sentiment of the divinity of Christ and the Trinity, we are certain our trinitarian brethren, instead of desiring to embarrass the dissemination of our pamphlet, will, in aid of their cause, endeavor that its currency may be general. We, as well as they, feel interested in the promotion of truth. If we are mistaken in our ideas on this subject, we hope they will do their best, *by fair and candid argument*, to set us right. It is a doctrine with us, that error is of no use to any one, but of pernicious ten-

dency. We would therefore be always open to conviction, and followers of real truth let it lead us where it may.

It has been our endeavor to treat the subject in a candid manner, and our opponents with respect. If we have deviated, in any instance, from this intention, or if there be any thing, which may be called *harsh* and *unchristian* in this work, we hold ourselves in readiness to make a becoming acknowledgment to any one, who will do us the kindness to point it out.

Should a reply be made, we hope it will be conducted with christian decorum and decency, and that argument will be allowed to take the place of all bitterness and railings. The former, if sound and solid, will have weight to decide the cause in question. The latter cannot fail to degrade, in the minds of the sober and judicious, him who advocates even the best of causes. Upon this ground we are willing to pursue a free and general discussion of the subject concerning God and Christ ; firmly persuaded that a candid, accurate, and thorough investigation of the scriptures, on this and every other point of doctrine, will, instead of being detrimental, prove beneficial to the cause of christianity.

Finally. Though we are fully persuaded of the doctrine here taught, yet it is by no means our desire that any one should assent to it, who is not really convinced of its truth. " Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Each is accountable for himself. Therefore call no man Master on the earth : But, like the more noble Bereans, search the scriptures daily to see whether these things are so.

If however the testimonies from the sacred scriptures, which have been adduced, afford conviction to your minds of the truth of the doctrine for which we plead ; if they establish you in the belief, that God is one person only, and that Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, is not the supreme Divinity ; we exhort you to act in character, to stand boldly for the truth, to confess it before the world, and to appear as its advocates. The doctrine is certainly important. It affects the christian practice. It enables

us to worship God without distraction. It makes the sacred scriptures speak a language, which is intelligible; and clears away the rubbish of mystery and absurdity from the christian system, which has led thousands to turn infidels, and involved many a believer in unhappy perplexities of mind. If men, who are persuaded of the gross error of the commonly received doctrine, do not avow their sentiments and stand in their defence, how is this error, which is taught our youth in creeds and catechisms, to be prevented from descending to posterity? How, by failing to advocate the truth, do you let your light shine before others for their benefit and advantage? How, in this way, are you a faithful friend of your fellow men, and of the cause of God? Did the ancient prophets, did Jesus Christ or the Apostles, because error had become fashionable, and the prejudices of the age in favor of it were such, as to render it hazardous for any one to call it in question, hesitate, on this account, boldly to advocate the truth? To say nothing of the loss of reputation, (which is the only evil we can sustain) did they not even hazard their lives in opposing the errors, with which men had obscured the revelation of God? Had they been faint hearted like some of the present day, who profess the religion which they taught, had they consulted their personal ease, reputation and comfort in life; and bowed before the errors and prejudices of mankind, where should we have now been, but in the heathenism of our ancestors? What if the venerable Reformers had concealed the truth, of which they became possessed, and had made no opposition to the torrent of Papal error, which shrouded christianity, in darkness. Europe and America would, in this nineteenth century, have been the blind devotees of the most abominable errors, superstitions and absurdities. The believers in truth must openly espouse her cause, or there will be no reformation. No medium exists between doing this and giving our weight into the opposite scale. If we do not appear in behalf of truth, we sanction error, and silently hand down the pernicious legacy to future generations.

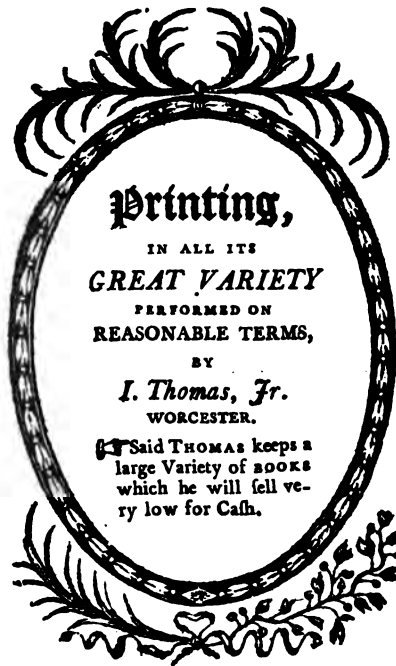
INDEX of passages of Scripture explained in the above TREATISE.

	Chap.	Verse.	Page.		Chap.	Verse.	Page.
Genesis	i	1 &c	118	John	x	18	76
	iii	22	122		—	29	165
	xvi	7, 10	129		—	30	123
Judges	xvii	6, 21	137		xii	37, 41	85
I Chron.	xxix	20	64		xiv	28	165
Psalms	lxxxiii	18	80		xvi	30	41
Isaiah	viii	14	85		xvii	3	157
	ix	6, 7	81		—	7	162
			114		xx	17	170
	xvi	5	86		—	21, 23	60
	xvii	14	98				126
	xlii	1	154		—	28	74
	xliv	6	88		xxi	17	43
	xlvi	11	69	Acts	ii	10	101
	liv	5	87		—	25	64
Jerem.	xvii	5	140		iii	12-16	138
	—	10	43		iv	26, 27	155
	xxiii	6	80		x	38	162
	xxxiii	16	81		xx	28	103
Micah	v	2	52	Romans	i	9	101
Zech.	xii	10	97		ii	16	39
Matt.	i	20	135		ix	5	72
	—	23	98				101
	ix	28	56	I Cor.	ii	8	116
	xii	28	186		iii	23	166
	xvi	27	155		x	9	110
	xviii	20	48		xi	3	166
	xxvii	46	157		xv	24, 28	167
	—	—	170	II Cor.	iv	14	39
	xxviii	18	161		xi	31	170
	—	19	179		xiii	4	161
	—	20	48	Gal.	iii	19	133
Mark	ii	7	56	Eph.	i	3-17	170
	xiii	32	159		—	17-22	38
	xv	17, 19	65		—	20	162
Luke	i	32	156		ii	6-11	164
	xi	20	186		—	10	30
John	i	1-14	17		—	13-21	31
	—	41	155		iv	24	30
	iii	13	45	Phil.	iii	21	38
	—	34	163	Col.	i	16, 17	23
	—	35	161	I Timothy	ii	5	152
	v	20	159		iii	16	92
	—	20-30	39		vi	1	181
			161	Titus	ii	13	78
	vi	57	160	Hebrews	i	3-11	33
	viii	58	49		ii	16	104

INDEX.

	Chap.	Verse.	Page.		Chap.	Verse.	Page.
Hebrews	ii	17	146	Jude		25	60
	iii	4	79	Ray.	i	8	111
	x	5	101		—	11	88
	xiii	8	54		—	17, 18	112
I Peter	ii	8	85		ii	23-27	43
I John	v	7	175				

THE END.



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