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The evidence and authority
of divine revelation

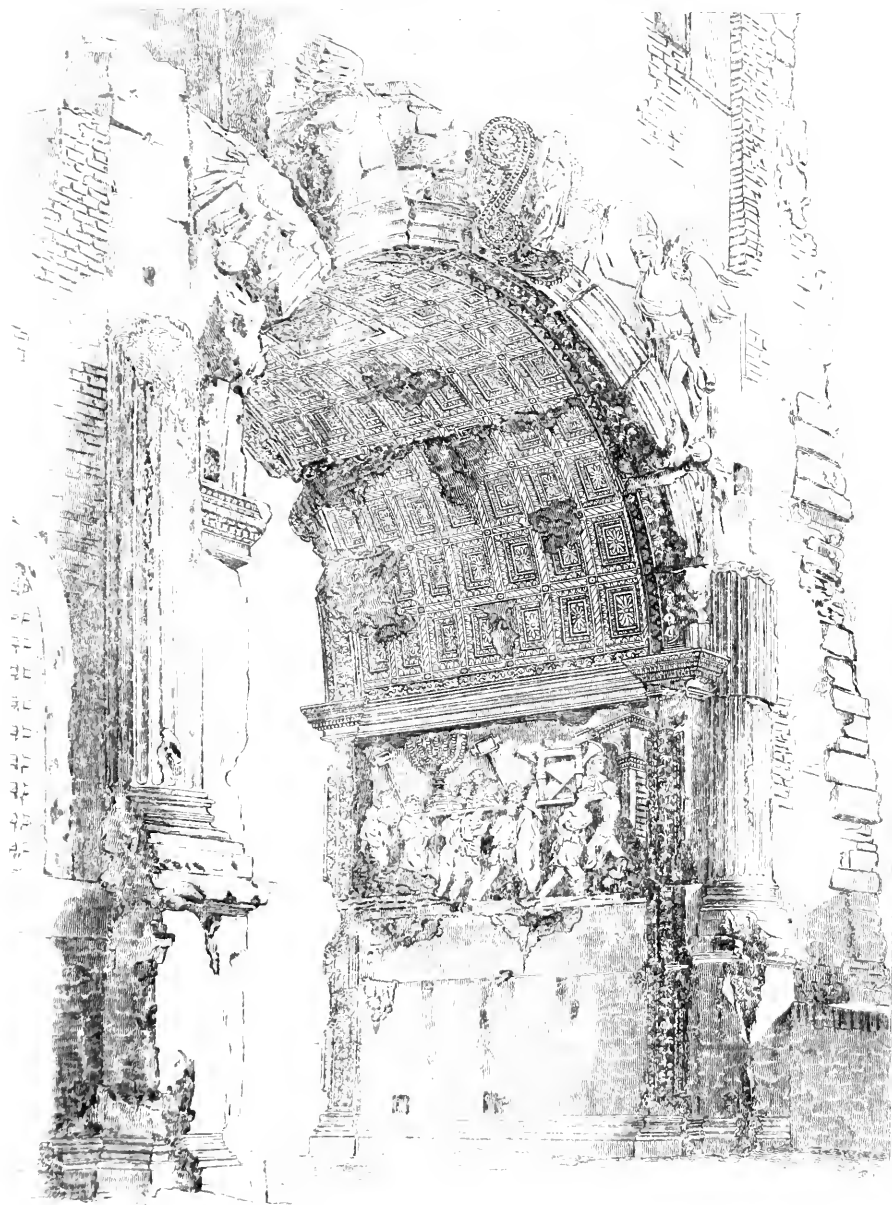
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THE
EVIDENCE AND AUTHORITY
OF
DIVINE REVELATION,
BEING A VIEW OF
THE TESTIMONY
OF
THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS
TO
THE MESSIAH,
WITH
THE SUBSEQUENT TESTIMONIES.

By ROBERT HALDANE, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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P R E F A C E

TO THE

S E C O N D E D I T I O N .

THE first edition of the following work having been long ago exhausted, a second would have been sooner published, had not the author been prevented by other engagements from making those alterations and additions which seemed necessary to the completion of his original plan. The nature of that plan, and the manner of its execution, are explained in the following Introduction. Several new Chapters are now added, and many sources of evidence more fully examined. Instead of being a Book merely supplementary to those which have already occupied the same ground, the Author has all along aimed at an object, not in the contemplation of the great majority of those who have chiefly distinguished

themselves by their writings on the Divine authority of the Christian Revelation. He has long been deeply convinced that it is necessary to attend, not merely to the arguments which can be adduced to prove the Bible to be true, but to the Salvation which it reveals. Many have believed the Bible to come from God, who have remained strangers to the saving and sanctifying influences of the Gospel which it declares. They have acknowledged the beauty and the excellence of the book itself, but have forgotten the pearl of great price that it contains. It has therefore been his study not merely to silence and refute the cavils of the sceptic and the infidel, but to strengthen the faith of the true believer; not to illustrate the Evidences of Christianity in the abstract, but to hold them forth as inseparably associated with its doctrines, and to vindicate, not the authenticity only, but the full inspiration and unspeakable value of the Holy Scriptures.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is nothing more remarkable in the character of man, than his conduct in regard to eternity. The shortness of human life, the transitory nature of all earthly enjoyments, and the utter vanity of every object of human ambition, are truths which have been, in all ages, universally acknowledged and deplored. It might therefore have been imagined, that the prospect of never-ending life and happiness beyond the grave, would have been grasped at with an eagerness in some degree proportioned to the evanescent character of the present and the vastness of the future state of existence. In the pursuit of wealth, the world at large has toiled with a zeal and perseverance which has been abated by no disappointment, and overcome by no obstacle. There is nothing, however recondite, in the walks of science, or the speculations of philosophy, which has not stimulated the curiosity, and exercised the industry of multitudes. But strange as it might seem to one unacquainted with mankind, the evidences of Divine Revelation have been treated with an indifference and neglect altogether unparalleled. This remark cannot be

restricted to those only who reject the Bible, or indeed to any one class exclusively. It is applicable to persons of every description. It applies not only to those who openly renounce Revelation, and intrench themselves behind the ramparts of infidelity, but also to multitudes who profess to believe the Scriptures, and the doctrines they contain.

From the age of Celsus and Porphyry, down to that of Voltaire and Thomas Paine, it may safely be affirmed there never has appeared one solitary unbeliever who has discovered by his writings, that he was thoroughly conversant with the nature or the evidences of that Revelation which he undertook to overthrow. In most of the opponents of the Christian religion, the greatest ignorance is manifest. Their rejection of the Bible, far from being the result of a patient and full examination of its evidence, only displays a deep-rooted disaffection to its contents. They have evidently been urged to the acquirement of their slender acquaintance with the subject, not by the importance of the question, not by that love of truth of which they are ever boasting, but by the desire of discovering something weak at the foundation of Christianity. In this deplorable state of mind, it cannot be imagined that they would be assiduous in endeavouring fully to acquaint themselves even with those evidences which are most obvious. Far less can it be expected that they should diligently search for such proofs as require more laborious investigation, or that they should retain a deep impression of the distinguishing features of those testimonies to which they have been actually introduced.

They dislike the subject, and impatiently attend to it only so long as they hope to collect materials for cavil. When their unhallowed task is done, they usually take an abrupt departure, and for the most part bid a final farewell to that path, which, if pursued in a different spirit, might have conducted them to solid peace and eternal happiness.

If this be the case with the philosophic infidel—if this be the procedure of the boasted friends of free enquiry, shall we be astonished to find the bulk of unbelievers totally ignorant of the evidences of Christianity? They reject the Bible, because they dislike it, and justify their dislike by objections, which the slightest acquaintance with the subject would have altogether precluded. These objections, a thousand times refuted, they advance, as unanswerable, with a confidence, which shows that they have never deemed it of any moment to consider or receive those satisfactory solutions which have been afforded by patient research.

In every other concern of human life, the folly and danger of such conduct would at once be manifest. Eager enquiry, in proportion to the magnitude and importance of the object, would be made without delay, and no pains would be spared to obtain information. The most hidden sources of evidence would be carefully explored, and the most recondite treasures unlocked. No avenue would remain untried that gave the faintest promise of leading to knowledge. But in regard to the things of God, man's conduct is a mystery which Revelation only can explain.

A book that presents itself as a messenger from heaven, furnished with ample credentials, cannot be safely overlooked or rejected without enquiry. True wisdom cannot refuse to hear and examine it with candour. If its claims be well founded, they are paramount to all other interests, and all earthly glory in the comparison loses its lustre. If the Bible be the Word of God, its contents demand the utmost attention. This, however, is the only subject on which human curiosity does not relish information. The wise of this world, as well as the ignorant, neglect the book of God, and while they boast the most intimate acquaintance with all the sages of Greece and Rome, they know little of Jesus Christ and the Apostles.

How affecting is it to behold, upon the only question of infinite and eternal moment, so many make up their minds without any suitable enquiry, and madly stake their all against a body of evidence which they have never examined! Blinded by prejudice, and influenced by aversion to the truth, they impose on themselves, by the most silly sophisms, the unsoundness of which, on all other subjects, they would instantly perceive. Men of the strongest intellectual powers are frequently duped by objections that would not shake the faith of a child; some difficulty in the system of Christianity or the records of Revelation, strikes their mind, which, without a thorough examination, appears of sufficient weight to excuse them from farther enquiry on a subject which they find disagreeable. Such conduct verifies the Scriptures, and affords additional evidence of their authenticity. It shows human nature to be what

the Bible represents it, and stamps the character which it gives of man as a revelation from God.

But it is not only to avowed unbelievers that the charge of inadequate acquaintance with the evidences of Revelation attaches; it is in a great measure applicable to the majority of the professors of Christianity. Of these not a few appear to take this matter altogether on trust. It seems quite enough for them that there are elaborate books of evidence, bearing on their title-page the names of those who have been distinguished for learning and talents. Their conduct would be less irrational, if the mere abstract truth of Revelation were all that is to be considered, but it is perfect foolishness when viewed in the light of Scripture, which declares that its discoveries can be of no avail without personal faith. Though the truth itself stands unshaken by the sophistry of the sceptic, he that believes not the Gospel on its proper evidence, has no ground to look forward to the heavenly inheritance. But not only does it appear that multitudes who profess Christianity, without experiencing its saving influence, are little aware of the importance of this subject; even many real Christians, and some, too, far advanced in the knowledge of the divine word, are very insufficiently impressed with the duty and importance of studying the evidences of their holy religion. Convinced that it is true, they are often unmindful that there are degrees in faith, and that assurance of the truth of the Scriptures is confirmed by our acquaintance with their evidence. The more deeply and extensively we examine its proofs, the more fully do we perceive

that the Bible could not be the work of man. In studying the evidences of the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures, we are studying the Scriptures themselves; and while we advance in conviction, we advance in edification and Christian growth.

It seems, however, to be taken for granted, that books of evidence are principally valuable for convincing gainsayers of Revelation, or for the establishment of babes in Christ. Christians of long standing and extensive knowledge of the Divine Word, it is thought, may regard this subject as sufficiently ascertained, while they exclusively pursue the study of the doctrines and duties of Christianity. Now, it is humbly but earnestly suggested, that this is a very pernicious error. The study of the evidences of the book of God is intimately connected with progress in the knowledge of all the truth it contains. The subject is therefore highly important to believers themselves. For what purpose has God provided such various and striking proofs of its divine origin, if it be not that they should be diligently examined, not merely by the unbeliever, but by the true disciple? Though disquieted with no doubts, it is eminently calculated to afford him inexpressible consolation, as well as to confirm his mind and strengthen his faith, to view in their connexion the multiplied and various evidences of the truth of his religion.

There is another consideration that greatly enhances the importance of this subject, and ought to prompt Christians to an uninterrupted study of the evidences of the truth of the Scriptures. It has often been justly remarked, that we readily believe what we wish to be

true; and yet it is equally certain, that, in matters of the most momentous concern, we are greatly inclined to doubt. To reconcile these seeming contradictions, it should be observed, that with respect to the things which our inclination leads us too easily to believe, they are not generally of paramount concernment to us, however weighty they may be in themselves. On the other hand, the doubt that naturally presses on things of urgent and acknowledged importance, is not an incredulity that totally rejects, but rather a weakness of faith, accompanied by fears, conjured up by the very intensity of affection which we feel for the object of desire. These fears seem to create a barrier in the way of our enjoyment, which we wish to have removed. In the same way when, like Moses from the top of Pisgah, the Christian surveys the promised land, and looks forward to the glory that shall be revealed, he is ready to act like the disciples, who, when they first saw the Lord after his resurrection, could not believe for joy. Must not, therefore, the study of that force and variety of the incontrovertible evidences by which the truth of the Scriptures is attested, be useful to him, as long as he walks by faith and not by sight?

The evidence of the authenticity and divine origin of the Scriptures is of such infinite importance, as at once to invite and to justify never-ending research. It is a subject intimately connected with all the contents of the inspired book, which will be more or less fully developed in proportion as they are understood. Many there are who have been convinced of the truth of Revelation, while they remained ignorant of its peculiar

nature and character. They have yielded to the weight of proof to which they had nothing to oppose, but they have never explored those hidden recesses, which afford the most delightful confirmation to those by whom the characteristic wisdom of the sacred volume is discerned. Never having discovered this Divine impress of the Word of God, which is alike stamped on all the works of Creation, of Providence, and Redemption, such persons may upon the whole entertain a strong general conviction that the Bible is the Book of God. But still they must be ignorant of much of its evidence which otherwise they might possess, and must also regard some things as difficulties, both respecting the internal and external evidences, which, if properly viewed, would serve as confirmations of its truth. The man, for instance, who is not thoroughly aware of the Divine wisdom, and the unvarying plan of God, in permitting difficulties to appear in all his works, often finds himself at a loss to answer the objections of scepticism, even on the external evidence of Revelation. When we consider only one source of that evidence, something of this description will present itself, and, if we look no further, fill us with embarrassment. We see that in all his works God reveals himself in such a manner as not to exclude the possibility of wilful perversion; and this is wisely appointed to manifest the enmity of the heart of man to the God of Creation and Providence, as well as to the God of Redemption. Candid examination will find a criterion whereby to distinguish the hand of God; but if men hate the truth, it is the just retribution of a righteous God to give

them up to believe a lie. If this single observation be carried through every subject of our enquiries into the Works and Word of God, it will convert that which is to others a ground of stumbling, into an additional source of evidence. It is a characteristic feature of all that is *Divine*.

Though the Evidences of Christianity are immensely various and great, yet they are of such a nature as demand in the enquirer industry, attention, humility, and candour. They are not intended to overwhelm unbelief, or to deprive it of all possibility of excuse. On the contrary, every branch of evidence requires patience of investigation, and is accompanied with its peculiar difficulties, which disaffection to the nature of truth can easily magnify, so as plausibly to justify rejection. Even miracles themselves are encountered by false miracles, both of Paganism and Antichristianism. Accordingly, the first opposers of Christianity did not deny the miracles, but accounted for them by magic, and confounded them with others, such as the pretended wonders of Apollonius Tyanæus. And it is well known that infidels in modern times have resisted the evidence from the miracles of Jesus Christ, on the supposition that the miracles of Popery are as great, as frequent, and as well attested. The Scriptures contain many seeming contradictions, which it requires patience and information to reconcile. As these could have easily been avoided, we must believe that they were intentional, and must have been designed as a test of the obedience of man to the manifestation of the Divine will. The Spirit of God could have divested Revela-

tion of all appearance of inconsistency of statement ; He could present truth to every man with evidence that would afford no room for resistance. Jesus Christ, as the Sovereign of the world, could conduct his providential dealings in such a way as to stop the mouths of infidels, and cover unbelief with confusion and terror. Since, then, he does not this ; since he has left his Revelation open to specious objections from ignorance, rashness, and disaffection ; since he permits his enemies to speak against him, and he is silent ; since his hand wields the sceptre of heaven and earth, yet he darts no thunderbolts against the heads of his blasphemers, he must design his word to be a touchstone of the allegiance of the world to the throne of God.

If no plausible objections could be made against Christianity ; were its evidence such as to overpower unbelief, man would remain as hostile as he now is to the Divine character, yet that hostility would not be apparent ; disaffection to the truth would be as strong, yet would no tongue utter that disaffection. The assent of the understanding might be constrained, but the heart would still continue to be the citadel of man's enmity to his Creator. No good object would have been attained by such a method, and there would not only have been exhibited a prodigal expenditure of power, inconsistent with all the other dealings of Omnipotence, but man would have been left as much as ever a rebel and alien from his Maker, while the Divine glory would have been eclipsed rather than illustrated. The manner of Revelation, then, and the nature of its evidences, are designed to bring out the hatred of the

human heart to the character and ways of God. They are as gins and as snares to the wisdom of this world. Let those who carp and cavil at the word of God, on account of difficulties and objections, which are plausible only from their own ignorance, indolence, and disaffection to God, consider this solemn truth with attention and seriousness. They seem to think that God was obliged to furnish evidence of his Revelation that could not be resisted. One objects to this part of the Divine testimony, another to that; one will have this evidence, another will have something more. Some even require that a particular Revelation should be made to every individual, and that miracles should be successively presented to all eyes. How unreasonable is all this! If God condescends to supply evidence of any kind, it is sufficient to condemn gainsayers. Whom do we advantage by our faith? From the way in which many speak on this subject, it might be thought that we confer a favour on God by accepting his testimony. The benefit is altogether our own; the injury done by our unbelief falls upon our own heads. Let unbelievers then weigh the evidences of Revelation. Let it not be the work of an hour, but the work of their lives.

But if even the external testimonies of Revelation are elucidated by candid and attentive examination, how much more will the observation apply to the internal evidences. There is no end to our discovery of the evidence of Divine truth. Every page of the inspired volume will present us with rich mines, which cannot be exhausted, and which astonish and delight the Christian as he advances in his inquiries.

The authenticity of the Scriptures is not like the authenticity of the title-deeds of an estate, which, when once admitted and registered, need not afterwards be consulted. The Bible is valuable for the treasures it contains; and while any thing in it is unknown, or imperfectly discovered, it must be a subject of study. Were we even fully acquainted with all its contents, the necessity of meditating on it would not cease. It is the food of the Christian, and by pondering its glorious truths he is nourished. The importance, then, of studying the truth of Revelation, is seen in this, that the believer thereby advances in the knowledge of the things of God, and his faith is continually strengthened by keeping its evidence before his mind. The same reason that renders the constant remembrance of the death and resurrection of the Saviour necessary to edification, comfort, and growth in grace, also evinces the importance of keeping alive on the mind the evidence of those things that are reported in the Scriptures. The life of Methuselah would be well spent in the investigation of Divine truth; and the constant discoveries made to faith exercised in humility and a teachable disposition, would yield a thousandfold in the riches of knowledge and grace. Independently, then, of any additional knowledge, this study is eminently useful to the Christian; but as to additional knowledge there is no boundary, the subject is inexhaustible in extent, and infinite in moment.

It has been too much the practice to defend the truth of the Christian religion, as something distinct

from its grand distinguishing doctrines, apart from which no system deserves the name of Christian. Without reference to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, some of the sources of evidence must be entirely unperceived, and very many of them seen in an obscure light. If the Gospel is not clearly understood, it is impossible for the ablest writer fairly to exhibit its evidence. This circumstance forbids Christians to leave their cause on this subject in the hands of those eminent men who have generally volunteered the defence of the truth of Christianity. Many of them have been totally ignorant of the Gospel, and actual opposers of the salvation which the Scriptures reveal. Others, to say the least, have had a very inadequate knowledge of its doctrines; and where they have been uninformed, their defence, if not erroneous, must be lame and unsatisfactory. By the force of those natural talents with which God had endowed them, they have indeed succeeded in representing many parts of the evidence in a very striking light, as well as in repelling the attacks of its assailants; but they have in general either overlooked or misrepresented the nature of that religion whose truth they undertook to demonstrate. It is often something of an entirely different character which their labours are calculated to establish.

If an unbeliever were to read with attention the works of these writers, to be struck with the force of the evidence they produce, and to embrace their sentiments, he would still not only remain unacquainted with the plan of salvation, but would, moreover, be

confirmed in a system directly opposed to its design. The Apostles represent men, while destitute of the knowledge of Christ, as being without God, without hope, and under condemnation. They conclude that a man is justified by faith without works, and that the righteousness of God is freely imputed to all who believe, without any difference arising from their previous dispositions or conduct, and, consequently, that all boasting is excluded. But many acute and learned writers on the Evidences of Christianity represent what they call natural religion as the foundation of all our hopes ; they explain the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel as descriptive of a pure system of morality enjoined on men, and faith as a disposition to cleave to God, which may be possessed by those who are unacquainted with Divine Revelation. Instead of promoting in their readers the belief of the Gospel, by connecting the evidences of its truth with its essential character—by which alone these can be properly and fully illustrated—they distort and misrepresent its character and doctrines in such a way as to bring the whole in the end to correspond with the maxims of a vain philosophy, and the deceitful reasonings and self-righteousness of the depraved heart. They abandon the Apostolic doctrine, and substitute in its place a system, which to every unenlightened man will appear more rational, and which accords better with every principle of our fallen nature. The consequence is, that men's prejudices against the Gospel are confirmed by the authority of those who are considered to be its ablest defenders ; and the great foundations of unbelief,

so far from being shaken or removed, are strengthened. In a word, their writings contain a defence of Christianity at variance with the nature of Christianity itself; and where they are not positively erroneous, they are, in general, deplorably defective. These are not rash or groundless assertions. It would be easy to verify their truth, by referring to a whole host of writers, of the greatest celebrity, on the evidences of Divine Revelation.

Christianity will appear important just in proportion as its nature is understood. To him who perceives salvation to be only in Jesus Christ, its importance is inestimable. But this importance gradually diminishes with every shade of difference of opinion, through all the systems of self-righteousness, down to that which can perceive in the Lord Jesus Christ nothing but a virtuous man. Many of the writers on the Evidences of Christianity can recognise as legitimate every pretender to the honour of the name of Christian, and bandy compliments even with the infidel, while their books are meant to apply to every thing that men choose to call by that name. They make concessions that raze the very foundation of the Christian's hope. What remains of Christianity may be useful for this life, but leaves its votaries exposed to the wrath to come. What, after all, then, is the aspect of their works as regards the Gospel of Salvation? No number of such defences, were they ever so ably written, can be deemed, by the Christian, sufficient to supersede the necessity of defending the truth of religion, as it appears in the Bible, and of endeavouring to impress the im-

portance of that truth, connected with its evidence, on every individual of the lost race of Adam.

In the persuasion that these writers exercise a most pernicious influence, the following work, of which a new edition is now presented to the public, was undertaken with a desire of adding something to the scanty stock of books we possess on the evidences of Christianity, written according to the truth of the Gospel. To render this work as extensively useful as possible has been the author's constant aim. With this view, large additions have now been made. The materials collected by the writers above alluded to have been freely made use of, while at the same time it has been his study to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to avoid the errors with which their writings are so lamentably defaced. Whatever it has been judged might be useful has likewise been borrowed from other books without reserve. The remarkable harmonies of times and coincidence of events that are found in the Bible, which are introduced in this edition, are taken from a work of Jean Despaigne, which contains many others, though not arranged by him in any regular order. This is a species of evidence to the authenticity of the Scriptures, and the overruling providence of their Divine Author, which appears to have been almost entirely overlooked, although our attention is called to it in both the Old Testament and the New.

The First Chapter of the book is introduced to show the necessity of a Divine Revelation, with a view to make it evident, that without such a Revelation nothing can be known by man respecting the removal of guilt,

and acceptance with God. In opposition to those who have represented what is called natural religion as a sufficient guide to eternal happiness, and extolled it in such a way as to depreciate the Bible, it is there proposed to demonstrate, by an induction of facts, that natural religion can never conduct man in his fallen condition to God ; that neither the Revelation which God has given of himself in the works of creation, nor that of the work of the law written in the heart, when separated from the knowledge of the Gospel, can produce any other result than to render man inexcusable, and to declare his condemnation to be manifestly just. As the whole book is written mainly for the purpose of confirming the faith of Christians, proofs of the necessity of the Revelation of Jesus Christ are adduced from the Scriptures themselves, in connexion with a view of the deplorable circumstances of those boasted sages and philosophers who lived in the dark ages of Paganism, and did not enjoy the light of Christianity. Much may be said respecting this necessity even by those who are ignorant that the Christian Revelation has been vouchsafed, or who are not acquainted with what it contains ; but it is only from that Revelation itself that the urgency of this necessity can be fully known.

The Second Chapter, on the persecuting spirit of Pagans, is intended to remove a strong objection to the admission of the general depravity of the civilised Heathens, resting on their supposed religious toleration. This is a point on which their superiority to Christians is much vaunted by infidels, and often too readily admitted by some who might be expected to reason better

on the subject. Besides obviating this objection, the force of evidence arising from the Pagan persecutions, is there shown to be peculiarly striking, and to have produced a very powerful impression on the first Christians. The various proofs of the truth of the Scriptures are afterwards introduced in a regular series, in one connected point of view, arranged according to their dependence on one another, which seems the most natural order, but in which, so far as the author is aware, they have not hitherto been exhibited. The evidence arising from the correspondence between the Old Testament and the New, and the fulfilment of the former in the latter, has been particularly attended to ; and, for its further elucidation, the chapters on the Types and Prophecies that refer to the Messiah have in this edition been greatly enlarged. The subject of types may be abused, but, on the other hand, it has been too much neglected ; and the author can by no means subscribe to the sentiment of those who are of opinion, that nothing should be received as typical in the Old Testament, but what is expressly recognised as such in the New. The types of the Old Testament possess a claim to a much greater degree of attention than they generally obtain. They furnish a proof of the truth of Divine Revelation of a most peculiar and interesting description ; and the Christian who does not carefully examine them is neglecting one great means of edification which God has provided in his Word.

The view that is given of the Inspiration of the Scriptures contains an unanswerable proof of their authenticity. It is altogether different from that exhi-

bited by those authors who have treated on the question, and have followed each other in the adoption of the error which denies the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Proceeding upon that common, but dangerous and false hypothesis, it was impossible for them to avail themselves, with any adequate effect, of the argument for the truth of the Bible derived from its inspiration. It appears then more necessary to insist on this argument, since it has not hitherto been employed for this purpose by any of the writers on the evidences of Christianity, although the testimony it affords is peculiarly forcible. The truth of the Christian religion has been generally defended at the expense of the complete inspiration of the book on which that truth is founded; and so fatally prevalent has been this error, that the author knows not of an individual among them who has exhibited a just and scriptural view of this important and fundamental doctrine. Yet if we ask the most experienced unsophisticated private Christians what are their views of the inspiration of the Bible, with hardly a solitary exception, it will be found that they understand in its plain and obvious meaning the testimony of the Apostle, when he affirms that "ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Such notions as those which introduce distinctions in regard to the degree and extent of the agency of the Holy Spirit in the composition of the Word of God, are not from above, and cannot boast even of the semblance of a sanction from the language of the Bible. They originate in that vain philosophy which has been the parent of every pernicious and fatal error that has divided the

Church of Christ, against the indulgence of which the Apostle, when standing on the confines of eternity, so earnestly and solemnly warned his fellow-labourer Timothy. The plenary and verbal inspiration of Scripture has been held by distinguished Christians in this and foreign countries ; yet, by some strange oversight, this view of the subject appears to have been but incidentally mentioned by them, while in none of the different systems of divinity, either at home or abroad, has it been discussed and fully developed. The field has been left in the almost undisturbed possession of those who first introduced novel and unscriptural distinctions on the subject, who have been blindly followed by many excellent men, of whom better things might have been expected. The plenary inspiration of the Bible is a most important doctrine. The opposite error originates in some, in inattention, or in disaffection to the Word of God, and in others, in a desire to make the defence of the Scriptures, as they conceive, more easy. But the theory is unfounded and unnecessary, as well as dishonourable to the character of Revelation.

In furnishing extracts from writers who in early times opposed or adhered to the Christian religion, the selection has been made so as to bring into view the great truths of the Gospel, especially such of them as Arians, and Socinians, and others falsely called Christians, affirm to be the inventions of a more modern date. Throughout the whole of the work, the question of the truth of Christianity is never treated as one that is doubtful—on which the judgment should be suspended

till the proof of it is exhibited. The principle of its absolute certainty is everywhere assumed. It is not intended to prove that to be true which was previously doubtful, but to exhibit those evidences in their order which stand connected with the truth of the Bible.

No truth ever published is capable of such variety of proofs as the divine original of the Scriptures. Many different kinds of evidence unite their testimony in its favour, and in each of them there are innumerable links, strong in themselves when taken separately, but irrefragable when received as a whole. Above all, the character and glory of the Gospel afford the strongest evidence of the truth of Divine Revelation, and impart to the believer the highest consolation. They comprehend the very marrow and substance of the sacred record, and direct to its proper use. To study the Scriptures merely as a subject of criticism, or with a view to wrest them in support of their own errors, has been the object of too many of those who have spent their lives in turning over their pages. But the study of the Scriptures is only valuable, as it leads to the understanding and developement of Divine truth, and to a life of faith on that truth. It has been the constant aim of the author to direct the reader to the grace of God that bringeth salvation, and especially to arouse the attention of that numerous class in this country who are not ranked as infidels or avowed opposers of Christianity,—who profess to believe the Bible to be true, yet, after all, are not Christians,—to awaken their consciences, to point out their awful responsibility, and to induce them to listen to the truth as it is in Jesus.

The principal design of this book is to furnish Christians with materials to employ their minds on the subject, and especially to lead them into the right track in exploring the treasures of Divine Revelation. Books of evidence are seldom taken up by avowed unbelievers. They may occasionally be urged on their attention by Christian friends, and in this way be useful. But it is Christians themselves that the author chiefly hopes to assist, by exhibiting the evidences connected with the doctrines of Christianity. While the following work does not lose sight of the importance of convincing the sceptic or unbeliever, its chief object is to bring the believer nearer to God, and to induce him to live with his heart more in Heaven. Every thing it contains is intended to lead to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Jesus Christ is the centre and substance of all Revelation, and those who do not perceive the glory of the Divine character as it shone in him, are still ignorant of Christianity.

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CHAPTER I.

THE NECESSITY OF A DIVINE REVELATION.

NOTHING more clearly proves the darkening influence of sin in alienating man from God, than the manner in which many writers on the science of morals speak of the necessity of a Divine Revelation. They do not indeed affect to question its utility and importance as a means of advancing the knowledge, or improving the character of mankind, but their views of the dignity of human nature are far too lofty to permit them to acknowledge the humbling truth that a divine revelation is indispensably necessary. They deign occasionally to mention Christianity as the most perfect of all religions, and to compliment its tendencies to promote virtue and happiness. They praise its benevolence, they extol its simplicity, and they admire the purity, the beauty and perfection of its moral precepts. But it is evident to every attentive observer, that their systems, though not avowedly hostile to a supernatural revelation, are, with few exceptions, incompatible with the idea of its necessity, as well as with the truth of the doctrines which it has promulgated. Their natural religion, in its discoveries by the unaided light of reason,

is according to their representations only inferior to Christianity in its clearness and sanctions; and they exhibit human nature in such an aspect, that notwithstanding some trifling imperfections and weaknesses, it may very easily climb to the heights of the most arduous virtue, and by the force of native merit gain an eternity of happiness. No derangement evidential of the fall is at all discovered in the mental faculties, nor any alienation from God; while goodness is indicated by the appearances of human nature in its desires, pursuits, and practices. Man in all respects appears still the very same as when he came pure from the hands of his Creator. If he is susceptible of evil, he is without any natural bias to vice, and the very propensities of his nature, which, according to the Apostle Paul, subject him to condemnation by the holy law of God, serve only to exalt his virtue, by affording him an opportunity of displaying a more meritorious and rigid self-denial. In their systems of theology, they generally exhibit mercy as one of the attributes of God, discoverable by reason. But they have never been able to make it consistent with justice. Nor is it possible for any scheme to harmonize these attributes that does not make full compensation to the latter. To ascribe mercy to God according to the views they give of it, is to ascribe to him a blemish instead of a perfection.

But, waving their defects, it is enough, in order to lower the pretensions of these systems, to strip them of all they have borrowed from Christianity. The builders of moral systems, while they avowedly draw from the light of nature alone, usually take all the materials that the discoveries of the gospel have thrown in their way,

so far as these coincide with their predilections. In a scheme of moral science each exhibits the whole of his theological creed. What is agreeable to his prejudices he readily finds in the light of nature, and never reflects that what appears to him the discovery of reason is the dictate of pure revelation; or, though deducible from the works of God, has lain hid from the wisest of mankind. To settle any controversy of this kind, there is a standard of indubitable authority. Nothing can be justly claimed by the modern philosopher but what he can point out in ancient discoveries. Whatever the religion of nature could do, must be abundantly obvious from the writings of the philosophers of Greece and Rome. In them is shown the utmost that human reason, unaided by divine revelation, can discover of God and of human duty. Any moral truth which the world had not been able to discover in the study of four thousand years, cannot be reckoned to the account of the religion of nature. Nor is there the pretence of uninterrupted barbarism. In Greece for some hundred years the human understanding had the fairest field for exhibiting its powers. The most ardent love of knowledge distinguished that period from any other age of the world, while their habits and manners gave the lovers of wisdom the most entire leisure for prosecuting their studies. The names of their most distinguished sages are better known, in all civilised countries, than the names of the most eminent philosophers of the present day. Yet, with all their advantages, they did not know God.

Notwithstanding all the wise things which the ancient philosophers occasionally said with respect to God, they wavered with respect to those attributes

that are now thought to be the most obvious to reason. What philosopher, what peasant, now thinks himself at a loss to prove from the light of nature the existence of God? But how many ancient philosophers, as well as the vulgar, were ignorant of this grand truth, or even denied it? Who is it that now finds any difficulty in proving the unity of God? But show us any ancient philosopher who held this doctrine with a steady consistent faith. There is not one of them that can be said strictly to have held it at all. They spoke indeed of One Supreme; but the wisest of them did not hold this supremacy in such a sense as to exclude every other being from Deity and its attributes. It is therefore an abuse of language, and a false representation, to assert that they held the unity of God. Almighty power is now an obvious attribute in every system of natural theology; but where is the ancient philosopher by whom this was properly understood? They spoke, indeed, occasionally of God as almighty; but it was in reality an empty, complimentary expression. Whatever power they might in some things ascribe to God, they all set bounds to this divine attribute. He could, indeed, do many wonderful things; but still many other things he could not do. To create something out of nothing was, in the estimation of the wisest of them, beyond the power of God; and to raise the dead was supposed neither desirable nor possible.* Thus we

* That the Epicurean scheme was no other than Atheism disguised; that the hypothesis of the Stoics was little different from the Polytheism of the vulgar; and that the faith of the Academics was either none at all, or faint and fluctuating at best, will not be disputed by those who have any knowledge of antiquity. To judge of their sentiments by occasional sayings

might run over all the attributes of the Godhead, and we should find that not one of them was given, in perfection, to the Supreme Being of the philosophers of the heathen world. While they may be ascribed in words, they are in reality subject to innumerable limitations. In estimating, then, the importance of Revelation, it is absolutely necessary to consider the exact extent of that knowledge of God and human duty, manifested by the discoveries of ancient wisdom. As often as natural religion points to her systems of moral science, and from the perfection of these would lower the value of the discoveries of the gospel, she ought to be stripped of her borrowed feathers, and instead of the rich and brilliant plumage in which she now usually appears, if she is not altogether unfledged, she will have but a plain and scanty covering.

At first sight, these observations may appear to some

with which modern philosophers are wont to embellish their works, it may be believed, as many have believed, that the ancient philosophers were possessed of the whole system of what is called Natural Religion. But if we look into their writings, we shall be undeceived. Or if we take the testimony of one of the most considerable among them who had made their doctrines his study, we shall be told that the being and providence of God was, of all subjects, a matter of the greatest doubt and disputation among philosophers. Let Cicero's dialogues concerning the nature of the gods, stript of rhetorical embellishments, and reduced to simple propositions, be put into the hands of some peasant of common understanding and acquainted with the Christian revelation, and he will be astonished at the opinions of the ancients, the gross stupidity of the Epicureans, the frivolous superstition of the Stoics, and the presumptuous rashness of the Academics, and be thankful that he possesses the Holy Scriptures.

inconsistent with the doctrine of the Apostle Paul, in the beginning of his Epistle to the Romans ; but a moment's reflection will show the perfect consistency. That the existence, and many of the attributes of God, are written in the two volumes of the heavens and the earth, is a conclusion which reason ought in all men to draw, and is a thing which cannot be questioned by any man who acknowledges this Epistle of Paul to be a part of the inspired Word of God. But there is a difference between what reason ought to find out, if it would properly exert itself in the discovery, and what it has actually found out, or what, from the corruption of human nature, it would ever find out. The heavens and the earth teach a lesson, that, from the enmity of the heart of man to God, no man ever learned. And as a matter of fact, we find, that although the sun has been preaching to all nations for six thousand years the existence and attributes of the God that made him, no individual has ever fully understood his voice, or received his testimony. Men are not led by the preaching of the sun, moon, or stars, to the knowledge of the true God, because they hate him ; and even when from tradition they knew God, yet they did not like to retain him in their knowledge, but formed to themselves gods more suitable to their own character. Notwithstanding the incessant labours of these faithful preachers, when, at the end of 4000 years from the beginning of the world, Jesus Christ appeared, all nations, with the exception of the Jews, were found idolaters, and there was not an individual that had discovered and worshipped God, as manifested in his works, from the mere testimony of these works. The necessity, then, of an explicit revelation from God, to be promulgated to all

nations, in order to bring them back to the worship of himself, and to carry into effect his gracious purposes of mercy, is placed beyond all doubt. This will be fully evident, if we take a view of the religious, as well as the moral degradation into which the most distinguished of the heathen nations had fallen, at the time when civilisation was carried to the highest pitch of refinement.

The Greeks and Romans, with whose history we are best acquainted, who looked with contempt on all the rest of the world as barbarians, were plunged in the grossest ignorance with respect to the knowledge of God, and of those moral relations in which they stood to him, and to one another. Respecting their religious worship, they were all, without exception, idolaters. Innumerable deities were feigned by them, of the worst characters, and infamous for the most enormous crimes. They invented ideal gods of all classes, and for purposes even the most base and ignoble. They deified the inanimate parts of the world. They ascribed to their deities passions and propensities the most odious and abominable. These deities were represented by their worshippers as guilty of drunkenness, incest, rapes, adulteries, thefts, and quarrels. "They were distinguished for violence, impurity, fraud, revenge, rapacity. Mercury was a thief; Bacchus a drunkard; Jupiter dethroned his father; Venus was a harlot; Saturn murdered his own children." They were, in short, monsters of cruelty, lewdness, and profligacy. Statues and pictures were formed, and set up in temples dedicated to them, in which the worship of their votaries entirely corresponded with the characters they bore. It consisted in the vilest and most detestable

rites, many of which were cruel and contrary to humanity, and hence the licentiousness and impurity of their religious services became notorious. Human sacrifices were frequently offered on their altars. Many of their temples were places of avowed prostitution. Fornication and drunkenness formed part of the worship of Venus and Bacchus. Strabo relates that the temple of Venus at Corinth was exceedingly rich, so as to have in property more than a thousand harlots, the slaves and ministers of the temple, donations made to the goddess by persons of both sexes. Hence he says that "the city was crowded, and became wealthy." Such, according to Gibbon, was "the cheerful devotion of the Pagans," and such were the gods and goddesses who composed what he terms "the elegant mythology of the Greeks." The same, according to the history of all heathen nations, both ancient and modern, is the character of that idolatry, which in one form or other has overspread the earth, and which has been uniformly found the most gross in countries the most civilised.

Just notions of God, obedience to his moral law, purity of heart, and sanctity of life, were not enforced, nor even mentioned, as ingredients in the religious services of Greece and Rome. They prescribed no repentance of past crimes, no future amendment of conduct. The Heathen religion, so far from giving any aid to virtue, had not the smallest connexion with it. The actions of the Pagan gods, recorded in their sacred stories, were so wicked and impure, that they could not but greatly corrupt the practice of their worshippers. The morals of the people were accordingly such as might have been expected. They were wholly dissolute. Sensual indulgence, and every species

of cruelty, were carried to the highest pitch. The pleasures of the table became the chief object of attention, and every thing was ransacked to gratify the appetite. The most unrestrained sensuality of every kind was practised. Fornication, and the grossest impurities, were indulged without restraint. Divorces were so easily obtained, and at length became so common, that marriage, under a legal name, was often the vilest and most shameless prostitution. Parents were at liberty to expose their children to perish with cold and hunger, or to be devoured by wild beasts. Exposing them was frequently practised, and passed without punishment, and even without censure. The most civilised of the sages of Greece gave parents permission, by law, to kill their children. Suicide was recommended and sanctioned, by the practice of men of the first and most esteemed characters.

Wars were carried on with the greatest ferocity. Whole cities and nations were extirpated by fire and sword. Thousands of the vanquished were put to death in cold blood. In the midst of the ceremony of a public triumph, the general of the vanquished army, if taken alive, was put to death, and a pause was made in the triumph till his execution took place. In their battles, the combatants seldom gave quarter but in the hope of profit by making slaves of their prisoners, who were thus condemned to perpetual bondage. This being the case, we may judge of the nature of their conflicts. Instances occur of cities besieged, whose inhabitants rather than open their gates, murdered their wives and children, and rushed themselves on a voluntary death.

Above two-thirds of the whole inhabitants of the

most civilised countries are computed to have been slaves. Those who were in this unhappy situation, were treated in the most barbarous manner. Their masters had absolute power over them, and might scourge or put them to death at pleasure. This right was exercised with the greatest cruelty. When punished capitally, slaves were generally crucified. One of the friends of Augustus devised a new species of cruelty to slaves, throwing them into a fish-pond, to be devoured by lampreys. A chained slave for a porter was usual at Rome. For the correction of slaves, a lash was commonly hung in the staircase. Seneca mentions, without remarking it as an instance of cruelty, that regularly about the third hour of the night, the neighbours of such persons as took their meals at a late hour, heard the noise of whips and lashes, and, upon enquiry, found they were taking account of the conduct of their slaves, and giving them correction.

Marriage appears to have been seldom permitted to slaves. It was deemed matter of prudence, and on that ground it was recommended, to give a wife to the overseer of a farm, to attach him more strongly to his master's service ; but this was a peculiar indulgence to one in whom confidence was reposed. Married slaves were thought very inconvenient. Xenophon, in giving directions for the management of a farm, seems not to suppose that they were ever married. Plutarch says, that the elder Cato allowed the male slaves to have intercourse with the females in his family, upon paying a certain sum for the permission. It was the professed maxim of Cato to sell his superannuated slaves for any price, rather than maintain what he esteemed a useless burden. The custom of exposing old, useless, or sick

slaves in an island of the Tiber, there to starve, was not uncommon in Rome. Any who recovered, after having been exposed, had their liberty given them by an edict of the Emperor Claudius, in which it was likewise forbidden to put to death any slave merely on account of old age or sickness. If a master of a family was killed in his own house, and the murderer not discovered, all his domestic slaves were liable to suffer capitally. A Roman nobleman, who had 400 slaves, being assassinated by one of them, the whole, without exception were put to death. At the funerals of the rich, frequently, great numbers of their slaves were slain, as victims pleasing to their departed spirits. Were there no other proof of the inhuman treatment which slaves received, than the fact that, in the salubrious climates of Italy and Greece, they did not maintain their numbers, that alone would be sufficient. So far from multiplying, the stock of slaves could not be kept up without immense recruits from the remoter provinces. The cruelties practised in modern times towards slaves, have always been reprobated as most disgraceful. But in heathen Rome the humanizing influence of Christianity was absent, and slavery was consequently only mitigated by the restraints of self-interested cupidity.

Where slaves were so inhumanly treated, compassion to the poor is not to be looked for. Of any institution provided or sanctioned by their religion or government for the relief of the sick, the infirm, or the helpless, not a trace is to be found in the Pagan world. The laws of Israel enjoined the greatest kindness and compassion to the poor, and that the most liberal assistance should be afforded to those who were in

want. But, under the Messiah's reign, every thing of this kind, according to the predictions of the prophets, was to be carried into the fullest effect. Accordingly, the *first* regular institution for the relief of the poor, is to be found in the church at Jerusalem. On every Christian church throughout the world, the same duty was enforced, and the same means provided for its being executed. Christians were commanded "with quietness to work," not only that they might "eat their own bread," but that "they might have to give to those that needed." On the first day of the week, every one was to "lay by him in store" for this purpose, "as God had prospered him;" and persons among them were appointed to distribute their liberality. In every country to which Christianity has extended its benign influence, and in proportion as it has prevailed, numberless benevolent institutions have been provided for the relief of those in distress, nothing similar to which existed in the heathen world.

But the strongest proof of deliberate cruelty among the civilised heathens was exhibited in their public shows; in which gladiators, composed of captives, slaves, and condemned criminals, regularly trained for the purpose, were brought out by thousands into their immense amphitheatres, and there compelled to cut one another in pieces, for the entertainment of people of every rank. The combats of gladiators were at first used in Rome at funerals only, where prisoners were obliged to assume the profession, and fight before the tombs of deceased generals and magistrates, in imitation of the barbarous custom of the Greeks, of sacrificing captives at the tombs of their heroes. The Romans were so passionately fond of these spectacles,

that wherever colonies were established, it was found necessary to exhibit shows of this kind, to induce the emigrants to remain in their new country. The profusion of human blood which was shed at these shows, and the refinements that were invented to augment the barbarous pleasure of the spectators, are proofs of the dreadful degree of corruption and depravity to which human nature is capable of attaining. As these combats formed the supreme pleasure of the inhabitants of Rome, the most cruel of the Emperors were sometimes the most popular, merely because they gratified the people, without restraint, in their favourite amusement. That no occasion might be lost of indulging this savage taste, criminals were condemned to fight with wild beasts in the arena, or were exposed unarmed to be torn in pieces by them; at other times they were blindfolded, and in that condition obliged to cut and slaughter each other. So that instead of victims solemnly sacrificed to public justice, they seemed to be brought out as buffoons, to raise the mirth of the spectators. At the gladiatorial shows, sometimes twenty or thirty thousand men were slain in a month. The Emperor Trajan, who was extremely partial to these entertainments, gave shows of gladiators after one of his victories, in which ten thousand of these devoted victims combated. Not only the men, but even the women, were passionately fond of these shows. It was not till the Christian religion had superseded Pagan idolatry that prisoners and slaves were treated with humanity, and the bloody exhibitions in the amphitheatres abolished. With what truth do the Scriptures declare, that "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty!" To the honour of the

Jews let it be recorded, that when Herod proposed to introduce gladiatorial fights among them, they received the proposal with the utmost indignation.

But it may be asked, could philosophy do nothing to stem this overwhelming torrent of superstition, sensuality, debauchery, and cruelty? So far from doing any thing in the way of restraint, it was when philosophy was most cultivated, and brought to the highest point which it appears to have been naturally capable of attaining, that these enormous evils most prevailed. Those who called themselves philosophers, were separated into various sects. These may be divided generally into two great classes, both of whom felt the pressure of evil and sorrow in life, but neither were able to discover a remedy. In this situation, the one class sought a refuge in sensuality and extreme indulgence, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The other, wrapped up in pride, taught men to brave the ills of life, as not worthy of the consideration of a wise man.

Such of the philosophers as were not sceptics, for the most part acknowledged one God as superior to the rest, but corrupted the doctrine of the Unity by making him to be of the same nature as the other gods, though of a higher order. Hence originated the custom of the priests, who, in all their sacred ceremonies and devotions, after addressing themselves to the special deities to whom it was necessary at each particular time to offer up prayer or sacrifices, were wont to invoke all the gods in general. Socrates, the most enlightened of all the philosophers, represents the worship, not of one God, but of the gods, as the first and most universal law of nature. He taught his disciples to

conform themselves to the false religion of his country, which he countenanced both by precept and example. He sacrificed at the public altars, and sent to consult the oracle of Delphi. At his trial, he pleaded these facts as known to his accusers, to establish his innocence, and to prove that he had not denied the gods. If at any time he spoke against the religion of his country, it was only in secret and feebly. The last order he gave before he expired, and at a time when there was no temptation to practise dissimulation, was to sacrifice, in his name, a cock to Esculapius. That he died a martyr to the doctrine of the unity of the divine substance, Bishop Horsley asserts to be a vulgar error. Aristotle affirmed, that though there was one eternal first mover, yet the stars are also true eternal deities. Plato says expressly, that it is not easy to find the parent of the universe, nor prudent to discover him to the vulgar when found. In his treatise of Laws, and in his books of the Republic, he orders worship and rites to be performed to the gods, and to the demons, and to Esculapius. He prescribes the worship of the stars, which are indeed the divinities he principally recommends to the people. Cicero often speaks as if he believed that there was a plurality of gods. In arguing for the existence of God, he leads the people to a plurality, and asserts expressly that those who were accounted gods of the higher order, were taken from among men. He very much approves of the custom of paying divine honours to famous men, and of regarding them as gods.

Many of the most renowned among the philosophers held the doctrine of the TO 'EN. God was with them a sort of subtle spirit, which penetrated all nature, and

was therefore literally "the soul of the universe." The souls of men were particles of this universal mind; and, after their separation from the bodies to which they had been united, were absorbed into the *το ἔν*, or animated other bodies in endless progression. The consequences of this system are obvious. It is much the same as that revived by Spinoza. The idea of God is totally evaporated, since it allows of no being superior to ourselves. This pantheism, or mixture of the absurdities of atheism with the reveries of pride, which excluded prayer, humility, and whatever belonged to religious worship, except their hypocritical conformity to the established religions of their country, was the system of most of the ancient philosophers, and was still more impious than all the fables of the Pagan vulgar.

The first and highest God was not, according to the philosophers, concerned in the creation of the world. Cicero would not allow that God created the matter out of which the universe was made. Some of them held that the world was eternal, others that it was formed by a fortuitous concourse of innumerable atoms; but it was commonly supposed that the world owed its origin to chance. Much was ascribed to matter, or to what they called fate. It was a universal notion among them, that the Supreme Being did not concern himself with the affairs of this world, but committed them wholly to inferior deities.

Respecting the immortality of the soul and a future state, those of the philosophers who did not disbelieve them altogether, lived in entire uncertainty; and of the resurrection of the body, they seemed to have formed no idea. On the two former points they never arrived at any fixed opinion. Socrates concludes a long dis-

cussion, relative to the state of souls after death, by saying, "That these things are so as I have represented them, it does not become any man of understanding to affirm." In this strain of conjecture and uncertainty he continued to speak to the last. In his apology to his judges, he comforts himself with the consideration, that "there is much ground to hope that death is good; for it must necessarily be one of these two, either the dead man is nothing, and has not a sense of any thing, or it is only a change or migration of the soul hence to another place, according to what we are told. If there is no sense left, and death is like a profound sleep and quiet rest, without dreams, it is wonderful to think what gain it is to die; but if the things which are told us are true, that death is a migration to another place, this is still a much greater good." Aristotle asserts that "death is the most dreadful of all things, for that it is the end of our existence; to him that is dead, there seems nothing further to remain, whether good or evil."

"Whilst I shall exist," says Cicero, "I shall not be troubled at any thing, since I am free of all fault; and if I shall not exist, I shall be deprived of all sense." Referring to the several opinions concerning the nature and duration of the soul, he says, "Which of these is true, God alone knows, and which is most probable, is a very great question." Seneca thought the soul could last only for a determined period; for a time was to come when a general conflagration would take place, and all things be reduced to their primitive chaotic state. Pliny, the naturalist, labours to expose the absurdity of ascribing immortality to the soul. Speaking of opinions relating to a future existence, he affirms that "these are childish and senseless fictions of mor-

tals who are ambitious of a never-ending state of existence. Plutarch, having spoken of the cares and troubles of life, and quoted some passages respecting them from the poets, says, "If such then be the condition of human life, as they speak, why do we not rather applaud their good fortune who are freed from its drudgery, than pity and deplore them, as some men's folly prompts them to do? Socrates," he adds, "said, that death was like either to a very deep sleep, or to a journey taken a great way and for a long time, or to the utter extinction of soul and body; and, if we examine each of these comparisons, we shall find that death is not an evil upon any account; for if death be sleep, and no hurt happens to those who are in that innocent condition, it is manifest that neither are the dead ill dealt with." "Homer," he observes, "saith, death is made of iron, thereby intimating to us that it is insensible; neither hath he spoken much amiss." A little after, he adds, "The words of Socrates to his judges seem to me to be spoken even with inspiration:—'To fear death, is nothing else than to counterfeit the being wise when we are not so; for he that fears death, pretends to know what he is ignorant of; for no man is certain, whether death be not the greatest good that can befall a man, but they positively dread it as if they were sure it was an evil.'" In harmony with this ignorance of the philosophers respecting a future state, the Greek and Roman poets urge men to a full indulgence of their appetites, on the ground that life is short, and that death will entirely terminate our existence.

The philosophers admitted their own ignorance on these subjects, and the necessity of further instruction. Socrates, meeting Alcibiades going to the temple to

pray, dissuaded him from it, because he knew not how to do it till one should come to teach him. "It is altogether necessary," says he, "that you should wait for some person to teach you how you ought to behave yourself, both to the gods and men." Plato tells the Athenians, that they would remain in a state of sleep for ever, if God did not out of pity send them an instructor. Cicero says, "I do not suppose that Arcesilas engaged in dispute with Zeno out of obstinacy, or a desire of superiority, but to show that obscurity, under which all things lie, and which forced Socrates to a confession of his ignorance, and all those who were the admirers of Socrates, such as Democritus, Anaxagoras, Empedocles, and almost all the ancients, were reduced to the same confession. They *all* maintained that no true insight of things could be acquired; that nothing could be clearly perceived or known; that our senses were limited, our intellect weak, and the course of man's life short." According to Democritus, truth lay buried in the depths of the sea, or in a well without a bottom. Such was the utter uncertainty into which these philosophers had reasoned themselves respecting the most important of all subjects, the nature of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state; subjects of which barbarians, keeping closer to early tradition, were not nearly so ignorant. On this point, the remarks of Gibbon are just and striking, though they could scarcely have been expected from such a quarter:—"Since, therefore, the most sublime efforts of philosophy can extend no farther than feebly to point out the desire, the hope, or, at most, the probability, of a future state, *there is nothing except a divine revelation* that can ascertain the existence, and describe the condition, of the

invisible country which is destined to receive the souls of men after their separation from the body. But we may perceive several defects inherent to the popular religions of Greece and Rome, which rendered them very unequal to so arduous a task. 1. The general system of their mythology was unsupported by any solid proofs; and the wisest among the Pagans had already disclaimed its usurped authority. 2. The description of the infernal regions had been abandoned to the fancy of painters and of poets, who peopled them with many phantoms and monsters, who dispersed their rewards and punishments with so little equity, that a solemn truth, the most congenial to the human heart, was oppressed and disgraced by the absurd mixture of the wildest fictions. 3. The doctrine of a future state was scarcely considered among the devout Polytheists of Greece and Rome as a fundamental article of faith. The providence of the gods, as it related to public communities rather than to private individuals, was principally displayed on the visible theatre of the present world. The petitions which were offered on the altars of Jupiter or Apollo, expressed the anxiety of their worshippers for temporal happiness, and their ignorance or indifference concerning a future life. The important truth of the immortality of the soul was inculcated with more diligence, as well as success, in India, in Assyria, in Egypt, and in Gaul."

If such was the ignorance of the philosophers respecting religion, its worship, and its sanctions, and respecting the immortality of the soul and a future state, what opinions may they be supposed to have entertained respecting morals? These entirely corresponded with their religious notions. Pride and vanity were

their ruling principles. Many of them commended and justified suicide, and most of them judged lying to be lawful when it was profitable. Plato says, "he may lie who knows how to do it when in a fitting or needful season." He lays it down as a maxim, that it is necessary for rulers frequently to make use of lying and deceit, for the benefit of their subjects; and advises governors to practise falsehood when it is convenient, both towards enemies and citizens. Maximus Tyrius remarks, "there is nothing venerable in truth, if it be not profitable to him who hears it." He adds, that a lie is often profitable or advantageous to men, and truth hurtful. The laws of Lycurgus, who is extolled by Plutarch as a perfectly wise man, were defective in justice and honesty, and enjoined the grossest violations of decency.* According to them, the young women appeared naked in the public exercises, and at the festivals and sacrifices. The young men of Sparta were trained to dexterity in committing theft. Aristippus, the disciple of Socrates, maintained that it was lawful for a wise man to steal, and to commit adultery and sacrilege when opportunity offered; for that none of these actions were naturally evil, setting aside the vulgar opinion which was introduced into the world by silly and illiterate people; and that a wise man might pub-

* In the town of Pompeii, near Naples, which was overwhelmed by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and is now partly uncovered, the author has seen on the front of one of the houses, in a public street, a representation on the wall, which strikingly marks the total disregard to outward decency that prevailed among the inhabitants. That this was universal among the civilised heathens, is sufficiently manifest in the writings of their poets.

licly, without shame or scandal, keep company with harlots, if his inclination led him to it. Owing to such sentiments, and to divorces being permitted on very slight pretences, both by Greek and Roman legislators, the marriage state fell into such disrepute and contempt, that it became necessary to force men to marriage by penal laws. Cato of Utica, who has been held up as "a perfect model of virtue," who lent his wife to Hortensius, was a habitual drunkard, and taught and practised self-murder ; while Seneca pleads for suicide, and justifies Cato's intemperance.

Customary swearing was encouraged, if not by the precepts, yet by the example, of the most distinguished among the heathen philosophers, as Socrates, Plato, and Seneca. Scarcely one of them condemns the inhuman practice of exposing infants. Aristotle approves it, and even enjoins it as a duty to expose and destroy sickly children. Plutarch commends it in a particular instance as a virtue. Plato prescribes a community of wives in his commonwealth ; he gives great liberties to incontinency ; allows, and in some cases recommends, the exposing and destroying of the children of mothers older than forty, and of fathers older than fifty-five, and allows of drunkenness at the feasts of Bacchus. Cicero pleads for fornication, as having in it nothing culpable, as a thing universally allowed and practised, which he had never heard was condemned, either in ancient or modern times. Plutarch, in his book of morals, discoursing on the education of children, represents himself as entirely at a loss on one part of the subject ; and speaks of parents as "of a peculiar humour, and of a sour and morose temper," who resisted, with respect to those who had the training of their sons, that foul

crime which was the predominant disgrace of the civilised heathens, the guilt of which Gibbon charges on the first fifteen Roman emperors, with the exception of Claudius, who lived in incest. "I am tender," adds Plutarch, "of being the persuader or encourager of such a practice. But, on the other side, when I call to mind Socrates, and Plato, and Xenophon, and Eschines, and Cebes, with a whole troop of other such men, who have appeared... I am again of another mind, as much inclined by the zeal I have for the honour of such great persons." Socrates, Aristotle, Zeno, Plato, and others, are themselves charged with the same crime. Lycurgus by law permitted it, as is also affirmed of Solon. Cicero introduces Cotta, a man of the first rank, plainly owning to other Romans of the same quality with himself, that he practised it, and quoting the ancient philosophers in vindication of this infamous vice.

Hume, in his *Essays*, gives the following account of an accomplished Athenian:—"I think I have fairly made it appear, that an Athenian man of merit might be such a one as with us would pass for incestuous, a parricide, an assassin, an ungrateful perjured traitor, and something else too abominable to be named; not to mention his rusticity and ill manners. And, having lived in this manner, his death might be entirely suitable: he might conclude the scene by a desperate act of self-murder, and die with the most absurd blasphemies in his mouth. And, notwithstanding all this, he shall have statues, if not altars, erected to his memory; poems and orations shall be composed in his praise; great sects shall be proud of calling themselves by his name; and the most distant posterity shall blindly

continue their admiration : Though, were such a one to arise among themselves, they would justly regard him with horror and execration."

From the above details, we cannot be surprised at being assured on their own authority, that none were more scandalous in their manners than the philosophers by profession of all sects ; while the flagitious and impure practices of the heathen world are publicly avowed and celebrated by their most admired poets. Such was the dreadful condition, moral and religious, of the civilised heathens. The philosophers, the statesmen, and the priests, and, as might be expected, the great body of the people, avowedly addicted themselves to the most abominable vices. The gods whom they worshipped were represented by them as guilty of the same enormities. Their temples were brothels ; their pictures invitations to sin ; their sacred groves were places of prostitution ; and their sacrifices a horrid mixture of superstition and cruelty. Lord Hailes has with great justice remarked that "*the profligacy of the heathens in the apostolical age was more enormous than some people know, or at least are inclined to confess.*"

After adverting to the opinions and practices of the heathen philosophers respecting religion and moral conduct, it is needless, in estimating their qualifications as instructors and reclaimers of mankind, to examine those parts of their speculations which are consistent with reason and virtue. To recommend and enforce virtue they wanted sanctions of sufficient authority, and were ignorant of right motives. In respect to the rewards of a future state, their opinions were various and contradictory ; and all idea of future punishments was discarded by them. Cicero affirms that it was universally

held by the philosophers that God could neither be angry nor hurt any one. He admits the consequence of this universal principle, that it quite overthrew the notion of Divine punishments; and says in regard to an oath, that a perjured man need not fear the wrath of Heaven. He accordingly speaks of the punishments of the wicked as silly fables, and on a particular occasion says, "if these things be false, as all men understand them to be, what has death taken from him [a man whom he represents as a monster of wickedness, guilty of the most atrocious murders, &c.] but a sense of pain?" Plutarch treats the fear of future punishment as vain and childish. Seneca asserts that no man in his reason fears the gods; and contemns future punishments as vain terrors invented by the poets. In this manner did these philosophers, by their impious speculations, discard the fear of God; and as to the love of God, they were utter strangers even to the idea.

Their motives to the practice of virtue were absurd and illegitimate. One followed it for the love of fame and reputation; another, for the intrinsic beauty of its nature; a third, for the benefit of its effects; a fourth, for that the laws of his country required it; a fifth, for he knew not why. But none practised it on its true principle, conformity to the will of God, from whence glory to him naturally proceeds. They were also as much mistaken in man's ability. They pretended, that they had the whole exercise of virtue in their power, by the mere force and rectitude of their own nature, without any aid or assistance from the Deity. The stoics, a sect which, of all others, most cultivated the science and practice of morality, were so far from seeking the assistance of Heaven, that, with an unparalleled

extravagance, they placed their wise man in a rank superior to their gods, as having in him something of higher strength and fortitude ; for that he persevered in virtue amidst a thousand difficulties and discouragements, whereas the virtue of the gods had no temptations to shake it. In a word, such utter strangers were they in general, both to the nature of God and man, that Cicero, delivering the sentiments of ancient wisdom on this matter, expresses himself to this effect : “ All the commodities of life are the gift of Heaven, but virtue no man ever yet thought came from God. For who ever returned him thanks that he was good and honest ? And why should he ? For virtue is of right our own praise, and that in which man reasonably glories. This, in short, is the opinion of all the world, that the goods of fortune are to be asked of Heaven, but that wisdom is to be had only from ourselves.”

“ The ancient epic poets,” says Dr Johnson in his life of Milton, “ wanting the light of revelation, were very unskilful teachers of virtue ; their principal characters may be great, but they are not amiable. The reader may rise from their works with a greater degree of active or passive fortitude, and sometimes of prudence, but he will be able to carry away few precepts of justice, and none of mercy.”

The heathen philosophy comprised only idle and fruitless truths, with which the people had no concern ; or abstract and obscure speculations, with which they had no acquaintance. What principle in theology, or what rule of morals, has any one of the ancient poets or philosophers, or have all of them indubitably established ? How many of these four essential doctrines respecting God did any of the philosophers hold—

that there is one God—that God is no part of those things which we see—that God takes care of all things below, and governs the world—that he alone is the Great Creator of all things out of himself? Before the Christian era, no people in the world, excepting the Jews, believed these truths. None of the greatest and wisest among the Greeks and Romans held all of them, and very few of them held any of them firmly. The philosophers were a set of men who, on the first appearance of Christianity, most violently opposed it by all the arts of sophistry and injustice. And when by the force of its evidence they were driven to profess it, they immediately began to debase and corrupt both its doctrines and precepts. Tertullian affirms, that from their profane and vain babbling, every heresy took its birth. Whenever they or their philosophy are spoken of in Scripture, it is in terms of the strongest disapprobation. The Apostle Paul, after adverting to their unprincipled conduct in keeping back from the people what they knew of God, declares that they were without excuse, and that, professing themselves to be wise, they had become fools. In the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, he has given that appalling description of their depravity and guilt, which the truth of history, and their own statements, so awfully verify.

But, even though these philosophers had understood the proper motives to virtue, and had been able, by proper sanctions, to enforce the practice of it, they wanted the *inclination*. They proceeded on a systematic exclusion of the body of the people from all the means of moral and religious instruction. Instead of attempting to enlighten the multitude, all the influence which they derived from their knowledge was employ-

ed to rivet on their minds the authority of the most degrading superstitions. The vulgar and unlearned, they contended, had no right to truth. All of them, without distinction, held it as a fixed maxim, that no alteration was to be made in the established faith or worship. This was the express doctrine of Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Epictetus, Seneca, and all the other great names of antiquity. Philosophers, statesmen, magistrates, and every one distinguished either by his office or his station, worshipped the gods in common with the people, according to the established mode. "The philosophers," says Gibbon, "diligently practised the ceremonies of their fathers; devoutly frequented the temples of the gods; and sometimes condescending to act a part on the theatre of superstition, they concealed the sentiments of an Atheist under the sacerdotal robes." Their want of integrity, and of any settled good principle, is strikingly manifest in this temporizing conduct. Convinced of the folly and falsehood of the vulgar superstitions, they not only conformed to them themselves, but taught their disciples to do the same; thus making hypocrisy and dissimulation, in a matter of the last importance, an essential part of their instructions confirmed by their example, and perpetuating the most stupid idolatry in close connexion with the most abominable vices.

"These ideas of the philosophers of Europe," observes Dr Robertson, in his disquisitions on India, "were precisely the same which the Brahmins had adopted in India, and according to which they regulated their conduct with respect to the great body of the people. Wherever the dominion of false religion is completely established, the body of the people gain

nothing by the greatest improvements in knowledge. Their philosophers conceal from them, with the utmost solicitude, the truths which they have discovered, and labour to support that fabric of superstition which it was their duty to have overturned."

What has been already advanced, is sufficient to prove the utter unfitness of the heathen philosophers in respect of character, of knowledge, and of inclination, to reclaim mankind from vice, and to bring them back to the worship and service of God and the practice of virtue. But on this subject one point, and that the most essential of all, still remains to be brought forward; they were altogether ignorant of the great doctrine concerning the pardon of sin, and of the way of man's acceptance with God. These important questions were never made the subject of their consideration. So that, had their lives been as pure as they were profligate, their moral system as complete as it was imperfect and erroneous, and their knowledge of a future state as clear as it was perplexed and obscure, they would still have been blind guides, utterly unfit for the office of religious instructors; and the need of a supernatural revelation to teach man his duty to God, and the way of restoration to his favour, and of attaining to future blessedness, would still have been indispensable.

If man was originally under law to God, and if by the breach of that law he had become subject to the Divine displeasure, it could not be known, without a direct revelation from Heaven, that the pardon of sin was possible, or if possible, how it could be effected. That God will pardon sin in any instance, is a thing that without information from himself we have not principles to determine. On this subject, what is called

natural religion conveys no information. The doctrine preached by the works of God, though in many respects very important, is here utterly silent. While the heralds of heaven proclaim the eternal power and godhead of the Creator, as well as his wisdom, it is plain that from them we can learn nothing of his mercy; for they were sent forth to preach before mercy was needed by man; and they have received no additional instructions. They testify to us nothing but what they testified to the first man when he was sinless, and to force from them a declaration of mercy is to pervert their language.

In the works of creation, and in the moral government of the world, the justice and goodness of the great Creator are manifest; but their connexion and harmony cannot be discerned. The present is evidently a mixed state, in which much confusion prevails. One thing appears to counteract another, and neither justice nor goodness seems to attain its full end, far less do they unite and co-operate. Enough, however, is seen in these ways, especially when we take in connexion with them the convictions of duty arising from the remains of the law written in the heart, to leave every man "without excuse," and justly to condemn him before God, for not acting up to what he knows to be right. But what is there in all this to inform him of the way of a *sinner's* acceptance with God? What, then, can be said of natural religion, of which the above is the amount, as a system in any way available for the salvation of man? Can that be called religion, which, finding man in a state of alienation from God, leaves him at last as it found him, exposed to all the consequences of the divine displeasure? The wisest of the

heathens fell indeed far short of what they might have known, and of what they were inexcusable for not knowing. But even if all that is taught by the works of creation and providence had been universally understood and acknowledged by them, much would yet have been wanting.

Had then the ministration of what is called natural religion been committed to the ancient philosophers, as the ministration of the old covenant was committed to Moses, it would have been only, like that of Moses, "the ministration of death." On what terms God, who cannot "look upon iniquity," would hold fellowship with man, who daily sins, and comes short even of his own convictions of duty, the wisest of them could not tell. The original tradition respecting the way of acceptance with God, was wholly forgotten among them. Of the meaning of the sacrifices that were offered, they had lost all knowledge. Thick darkness had overspread the teachers, and gross darkness the people.

The philosophers were as little acquainted with the malady of human nature, as they were with the remedy. They were ignorant alike of the radical corruption of their own hearts, and of the holiness and justice of God. Had they known the former, their vanity and presumption would have given way to abasement and terror. Had they been acquainted with the latter, would they have dared to conform to the "abominable idolatries," which, without exception, they countenanced? Instead of spending time in the endless speculations of their "vain philosophy," would not their solemn enquiry have been, "wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God?"

A quotation has already been made from Cicero,

which proves their deplorable ignorance in respect to their own characters: "Whilst I exist I shall not be troubled at any thing, since *I am free of all fault.*" Here we have a picture of midnight darkness, of a mind "blinded by the god of this world." How different was the view of himself entertained by the Apostle Paul! "I am carnal, sold under sin. I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But he had been made acquainted with that *righteousness* which God had provided, and which he had joyfully accepted. It is not, therefore, on any precarious or hollow foundation of the supposed purity of his life, or of the *chance* of non-existence in a future state that he rests. He stands with confidence on a specified and certain ground of hope; "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."—"Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In order to form some comparative estimate of the strength of the different principles which supported the minds of these two men, both confessedly great in their way, let us view them in adverse and trying circumstances. Cicero, deserted by his friends, and in the prospect of suffering death, has nothing to rest on but the broken reed of his own rectitude, and as to futurity he is in total darkness. Paul, in his last hours, his work done, and himself about to be put to death as an evil doer, after exhorting a fellow-labourer to endure afflictions, and to persevere in that cause for which he was now to suffer, breaks out into that triumphant exclamation, to which there is nothing comparable, or

in the smallest degree similar, in all the works of all the philosophers: "*I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*"

We have now contemplated the state of the ancient heathen world as illustrated by the records of history, and the writings of the Greek and Roman philosophers. We have surveyed the dismal picture of the inhabitants of the most civilised countries, sunk in the grossest superstition, stained with the blackest crimes, and wallowing in the most degraded sensuality. We have seen with what a feeble arm their boasted philosophers strove to combat the gigantic forms of error by which they were enslaved, and that so far from holding forth the truth, even in its faintest glimmerings, these celebrated men were themselves in theoretical opinions, the victims of delusion, and in practical morality the slaves of vice. If such was the character of paganism of old, what expectations can we entertain regarding those nations in modern times, on whom the Sun of righteousness has not arisen with healing in his wings? If Socrates died in the very act of idolatry; if Plato, after vainly speculating about the immortality of the soul, and the nature of the Divine Being, finally acknowledged the fruitlessness of his enquiries; if Cicero found himself involved in the same doubts and darkness; and if the whole of their philosophy has been emphatically described in scripture as the profession of wisdom terminating in folly, what could we hope in behalf of the

rude barbarians of modern Africa, America, or Asia, or even of the more civilised inhabitants of India or China?

Is it to be supposed that the modern heathens should rise superior to that doubt and uncertainty, which hung like a dark cloud over the most admired speculations of the most enlightened of the Grecian sages, or that they should arrive at clearer ideas of God, and of eternity—of the duty of man to his maker, to himself, or to his neighbour? Vain, indeed, must all such expectations be found. The character of man estranged from God, and destitute of the light of revelation, has been drawn by the finger of inspiration in the first chapter of the Romans: and, whether we look back to Egypt, the cradle of arts and sciences, to Chaldea, to Babylon, to Greece, or to Rome the final centre of ancient civilisation and refinement; or whether we look around on the pagan world in our own days, we shall still find the same broad and distinguishing lines of character, separating the heathen from those nations on whom the light of christianity has shone. Between the heathen rites of China or Hindoostan, and the idolatries of the savage New Zealanders, the Africans, or the aboriginal Americans, we can discover little practical difference. The same ignorance of God and eternity, the same absurd and polluting mythology, varying in its several forms, but agreeing in its essential features; the same cruelty, deceitfulness, and sensuality; all characterise the idolaters of modern nations, however diversified by language, climate, civilisation, and other outward circumstances, exactly in the same manner as they characterised all the idolaters of the nations of the ancient world.

In the vast empire of China, embracing as it does so large and fair a portion of the habitable globe, and comprising a population of 360 millions, we are told in the recent work of a Christian missionary (Gutzlaff), that though atheism is wide spread, still the idols are innumerable. One of their religious sects boasts that their idols are as numerous as the sands of the Hong river, and Gutzlaff himself saw, written over a shop near Peking, "Idols and Budhos of all descriptions, neatly made and repaired." The morality of the Chinese is on a level with their degradation in religion. They are, like other idolaters, remarkable for their falsehood and deceit, while the tone of public feeling among all classes is of the lowest description. In the article CHINA, in the Encyclopædia Britannica, written by Sir John Barrow, he says, "It is to be feared that the boasted morality of the Chinese is built on no principle of feeling or propriety of action between man and man, and that, where public decorum is not offended, there is no breach of moral duty. All ranks and conditions have a total disregard for truth. From the Emperor downwards, the most palpable falsehoods are produced with unblushing effrontery, to answer a political, an interested, or exculpating purpose." According to the testimony of other respectable witnesses, lately published, insincerity and dishonesty in trade, are faults with which the Chinese are very generally chargeable. Their distinctive quality is to cozen and deceive.

If we turn from China to India, what a picture do we there behold of idolatry and superstition, with their usual concomitants, cruelty and vice. Of their mythology a graphic description is given by the late Mr Wilberforce, in his celebrated speech in the House of

Commons, on the renewal of the East India charter in 1813. "The legends and histories of their actions, namely, of the deities, male and female, are innumerable, and in the highest degree extravagant, absurd, and incredible. The most enormous and strange impurities, the most villanous frauds and impostures, the most detestable cruelty and injustice, the most filthy and abominable conceits, every corruption and indulgence, are presented to us in their histories, varied in a thousand forms. Very many of them are perpetuated by images, temples, and ceremonies, and those of such a nature as it were pollution to describe. Representations which abandoned licentiousness durst hardly imagine within the most secret recesses of impurity, are there held up in the face of the sun to all mankind, in durable materials, in places dedicated to religion : nay, they are the subjects of religious adoration ; and miniatures of them are worn by multitudes about the neck." The character of the people may be judged of from their mythology. Accordingly, we learn from the testimony of various writers, some distinguished for their Christianity, and others for their indifference or opposition to the gospel, that the degradation of morals among the Hindoos is truly affecting. Dr Carey, the distinguished Baptist missionary, who laboured among them for nearly fifty years, observes, " Lying, theft, whoredom, and deceit, are sins for which the Hindoos are notorious. There is not one man in a thousand who does not make lying his constant practice." Another writer of a different character, Mr Forbes, who resided for so long a period in the East, remarks, " Their cruelty, avarice, craftiness, and duplicity, occasioned me a thousand grievances,

which I could neither counteract nor redress, and displayed such shocking traits, rooted and strengthened by religious opinion, prejudices of caste, and habits of oppression, as baffled all my endeavours to relieve the poor peasantry suffering under their tyranny." "They make not the least scruple," says the late Lord Teignmouth, governor of Bengal, "of lying, where falsehood is attended with advantage. To lie, steal, plunder, ravish, or murder, are not deemed sufficient crimes to merit expulsion from society."

The morality of the Hindoos was at one period a subject of panegyric among infidels, eager in their blinded zeal against Christianity to find something good in any other system of religion. Of the justice of these panegyrics we have already had some evidence. If more be wanted, it may be found in the abandoned profligacy of their worship, in the casting of human beings into the Ganges, in the multitudes of the victims crushed under the cars of their idols, and of widows burned on the funeral piles of their husbands. The horrid murders committed in cold blood by a tribe of Hindoos called THUGS, as an offering of blood to one of their deities have lately been brought to light. In speaking of this diabolical practice, the Edinburgh Review (January, 1837) observes, "To the Thugs murder is an act of religion, just as much as the practice of charity is to the Christian." And again, "it will now, we think, be apparent in what the principle of Thuggee consists; what it was which gave rise to the phenomenon of several thousand persons pursuing murder as a trade, generation after generation." In Ceylon there are five different systems of idolatry, and the devil is regularly and systematically worshipped. In thousands of instances the poor

deluded people, we are informed, are so anxious to place themselves and all connected with them under the care and protection of the devil, that their children are solemnly dedicated to him before they are born. Of the people of Borneo, Mr Abeel says, "war is their business ; murder their pastime ; and the trophies of cruelty their proudest distinction." Among the Mexicans, when the new world was discovered, of all offerings, human sacrifices were deemed the most acceptable. Their last Emperor, Montezuma, is said to have offered twenty thousand annually, while it is estimated that throughout the whole country the blood of fifty thousand was every year shed upon their altars. Such is a specimen of what Gibbon calls "the cheerful devotion of the Pagans." The same testimony might be given as to the tribes of Africa, which have lately been visited.

There is still another proof, that "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty," which ought not to be omitted in the black catalogue of heathen wickedness. The horrid crime of infanticide appears to be as characteristic of every heathen nation in modern, as it was in ancient times. This dreadful proof of the malignant influence of idolatry has been alike exhibited among Pagans, by the savage and by the sage, from the earliest periods down to the present day. The expediency of this practice was taught by Plato ; it was countenanced by Aristotle, and expressly approved by Seneca and Plutarch. At Sparta, it was permitted by Lycurgus ; and was in like manner legalized in Athens, the chosen metropolis of philosophy, and at Rome, the mistress of the world. Why, then, should we wonder if we find the same crime still prevailing where the benign influence of Christianity has not

penetrated, and where men are still left to the operation of their own corrupt dispositions, urged on by the malice of the devil, and unrestrained by the voice of mercy heard in the gospel of the grace of God?

In China, the greatest and most extensive heathen nation in the world, female infanticide is practised on the largest scale. In the city of Peking alone, it is estimated that four thousand infants are annually destroyed. It is a general custom throughout the country to drown a large portion of the new-born female infants. In India, the practice has been partially abolished by the British government, but it still exists to a dreadful extent. To these horrid exhibitions of human depravity, we may add that the blackness of heathen darkness is relieved by none of those works of benevolence and philanthropy which adorn every Christian country. Hospitals and infirmaries, as has already been stated, were unknown before the introduction of Christianity. They are equally unknown among modern nations destitute of the gospel. In India, the indifference with which the aged, the infirm, or the sick are left to perish is appalling; while, in the vast territories of the Chinese Empire, it is believed there does not exist one charitable institution.

If any additional evidence of the necessity of a divine revelation is to be sought for from the state of the heathen world, it may be found in the contrast between the former and present condition of those Pagan islanders of the South Seas, who are renouncing idolatry, and embracing the glorious gospel of salvation. In a recent work by Mr Williams, the well-known missionary to the South Seas, which has obtained so great a circulation, the author gives a fearful account of the prevalence of infanticide in the islands which have been

the scene of his labours. Among many most appalling proofs of the extent of this unnatural and diabolical species of wickedness, he mentions one instance in which three native converts casually acknowledged that they had murdered in all one-and-twenty children. Mr Williams concludes the subject with the following just observations :—“ What a truly affecting picture do these facts exhibit of human nature, where the light of divine truth has not beamed upon its darkness—where the religion of the gospel has not exercised its benign influence ! They show that the sun may shine for ages, with all its boundless beneficence, and yet fail to kindle in man a spirit of benevolence ; that the earth may pour forth her abundance, and not teach man kindness ; that the brute creation, impelled only by instinct, may exhibit parental fondness, and man fail to learn the lesson. By no species of ingenuity could we instruct the beasts of the field thus barbarously to destroy their young. Even the ferocious tiger prowls the forest for their support, and the savage bear will fearlessly meet death in their defence. But the facts now stated are only in harmony with innumerable others, which prove that in every place, and under all circumstances, men need the gospel. Whether you find them upon the pinnacle of civilisation, or in the vortex of barbarism ; inhabiting the densely populated cities of the East, or roaming the wilds of an African wilderness ; whether on the wide continent or the fertile islands of the sea ; surrounded by the icy barriers of the poles, or basking beneath a tropical sun—*all* need the gospel ; and *nothing* but the gospel can elevate them from the degradation into which they have been sunk by superstition and sin. Let science, then, go with her discoveries, and philosophy with her wisdom, and

law with her equitable sanctions and social benefits, and let them exert their united influence to bless and elevate our benighted world ; but let it be the labour and ambition of the Christian to convey that GLO-RI-OU-S GOSPEL, by which alone the regeneration and happiness of mankind can be fully and permanently secured."

From the above account of the heathen nations, both ancient and modern, the insufficiency of what is called natural religion to enlighten mankind in their present state of apostasy may be clearly estimated, and its being totally inadequate to lead men to God fully ascertained. We see what were its effects in the most civilized nations of antiquity, on those who were most ardent in their pursuit of knowledge and most remarkable for their acquirements beyond others of their time. Amidst all their speculations and reasonings, they remained in absolute uncertainty respecting those important questions, which above every other it concerns creatures destined for immortality to resolve ;—how shall man be just with God, and to what is he destined in that future and eternal state, nearer to which each succeeding hour conducts him ? And what, we may ask, are the effects at this day of the philosophical researches of the most eminent men in modern times who neglect the revelation of the gospel, which appears to them to be folly ? Their studies, directed to physical or moral science, elevated and sublime as they may appear to be, leave them, when separated from the knowledge of the gospel, in ignorance of their own character and of the character of God, of their condition as sinners, and of the value and saving influences of that Word which God has magnified above all his name.

An unbelieving astronomer, it has been said, is mad ; but the study of astronomy will never conduct men to God. So far is this from being the case, that many of the most distinguished astronomers, as well as geologists, have remained as much unacquainted with the way of salvation as the most benighted heathens, and even determinedly opposed to it. To what superior light did Mr Hume attain after all his philosophical researches ? On the contrary, he involved himself in total darkness. The confession with which he shuts up his enquiries on religion should operate as a solemn warning to all who, pushing reason beyond its legitimate province, reject the abundant means of knowledge which God has vouchsafed, that are graciously adapted to the present state and nature of man. "The whole," says he, "is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery. Doubt, uncertainty, suspense of judgment, appear the only result of our most accurate scrutiny concerning this subject."* After all, the attainments of these men in their several enquiries, whether lawful and useful in themselves, like those of the astrono-

* When Mr Hume's philosophical friends visited him on his death-bed, he appeared to them to be cheerful, and was even unbecomingly jocular, as is narrated in that discreditable letter which after his death was addressed by Dr Adam Smith to Mr Strahan, and which has been exposed as it deserves by Bishop Horne. But when these friends were not present, it is said to have been far otherwise with him, indeed the very reverse ; and that, in the gloom of his mind, he observed on one occasion to the person who attended him, that he had been in search of light all his life, but that now he was in greater darkness than ever. This is entirely consistent with the above deliberate avowal when he was in health and at ease.

mer, or blasphemous and pernicious, like those of the sceptical philosopher, the question that was put of old may be urged on them all, which, if they have neglected the great salvation, they must be conscious implies their condemnation; “*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*” The comparison that may be drawn between natural religion, or the revelation of nature, and the revelation of the gospel, will exhibit in the most conspicuous manner the impossibility that the former can supply the place of the latter.

The revelation of grace in the gospel may be considered in comparison with that of nature, either as the latter came immediately from the hand of God, or in the darkness which has been occasioned to it by sin. The revelation of the gospel is given by the word of instruction, whereas the other is made in the way of a work or operation, which is a manner more obscure, more embarrassed, and more limited. Besides this, there are many things revealed in the gospel, of which we can have no knowledge from nature, as for example the doctrine of the Trinity, of the incarnation, of heavenly felicity, of the resurrection of the dead, and, in one word, all the mysteries of the economy of Jesus Christ. When we consider nature in its darkness occasioned by sin, we see almost all that it teaches turned to bad uses, and applied in a manner that leads to folly and extravagance. The sentiment that there is a God is not extinguished—on the contrary, it is strongly impressed on the minds of all; but it has been unhappily turned to all that multitude of idols which the Pagan nations worship; or, where this is not the case, to an idea of God which is altogether false and erroneous. The

necessity of religion is recognised, for there is no nation that can live without religion ; but how many superstitions does this sentiment beget? The necessity of living morally is also turned to a bad use. In one word, there are none of the lights of the revelation of nature which are not corrupted and spoiled by the aberrations of man.

While the revelation of nature in the state of innocence was something very uniform, and while its different parts had an admirable relation one to another, it has happened, that by the entrance of sin, a subversion almost universal has taken place, which has destroyed all that admirable symmetry and that justness of correspondence of its parts which shone in its economy. God, for example, who in the works of the heavens and the earth appears good, beneficent, and infinitely favourable to the human race, appears at the same time as an adversary offended, full of aversion to man, in the fatal accidents, the tragical events that occur from time to time, the floods, the earthquakes, the destruction of cities by the fire of heaven, the famines, the pestilences, and other such things. What relation does there appear between infinite goodness and so much wrath? Man, that great work of the hands of God, an epitome of all the perfections which are seen scattered up and down among the other creatures, is, as the lord and absolute master of all the works of God here below, formed for happiness and virtue. But at the same time we see him the slave of his passions, unworthily defiled and dishonoured by a thousand crimes, unhappy in his designs, misled in his ideas, overwhelmed with multiplied miseries in this life, and subjected to death. What relation is there betwixt so much majesty and so much meanness, so

much glory and so much ignominy? Such is the state in which we find the revelation of nature since the entrance of sin, like to the ruin of a beautiful palace, where we see on one hand magnificent columns and porticoes, but on the other marks of conflagration and destruction. In one word, it is a confused mass of beauties and desolations, of splendid grandeur and gloomy horror.

These considerations conduct us to the necessity of the revelation of Jesus Christ, and to the economy of his grace. For, with respect to the first disorder which has been remarked in nature, consisting in the bad use and pernicious application that men have made of the truths revealed in the work of the universe, God has, by the revelation of the Gospel, done two things; by the one he has confirmed and enhanced these truths, and set them in an entirely different light; by the other he has rectified their use and application, leading men back from their wanderings, dissipating their errors, and overthrowing their vain superstitions. Besides, as to the other thing that has been also remarked, namely, the mixture of contrarieties which appears in nature, the gospel has not only discovered the true causes of it, which were for the most part unknown, but has, besides, repaired the ruins under which nature groaned. From all this, we see the necessity of the supernatural revelation of Jesus Christ. For nature, in the state in which it is under sin, could not furnish to man what was necessary for his living well and happily. It conducted him a certain length, but it left him at fault, for the ways of reason and its lights all led him, in their termination, to precipices. Nature taught him that there is a God supremely great and good, but it

also told him that he is an enemy to man, without furnishing any means for rendering him propitious. It informed him that man is made to serve God by religious worship, but it did not teach him what that religion ought to be, and it left him engaged in a thousand superstitions. It gave him to know that he was made for a sovereign good, but it left him in misery, without furnishing him with the means to extricate himself, and without giving him to see in what that sovereign good consisted, or the way to arrive at it. It was necessary, then, that God, in order to effect his purposes of mercy, should furnish man with a supernatural revelation, to relieve him from this labyrinth; and this is what happily the revelation of the gospel has effected.

In the revelation of nature, God displayed his admirable wisdom, which is every where manifest; for what can be more beautiful than the order of the universe as it appears before our eyes? But in the revelation of grace he has concealed the greatest wonders of his wisdom in such a manner as to give it the semblance of folly. In the beginning, he manifested himself to man in a manner clear and plain, conformed to the ways of human intelligence in the creation of the universe. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. But that way, instead of succeeding, had no other result but the blindness and the error of man. In the new creation there is nothing of that external magnificence. God here proceeds a second time in the way of mystery, that is to say, in wrapping up his designs under the appearance of foolishness, and in concealing the wonders of his wisdom in unsearchable depths. In order to perform the work of salvation, and that of the destruction of the empire

of Satan, he has employed means weak in appearance, and incapable of producing so great an effect. For what seems to be less fitted to issue in eternal glory and felicity than meanness, suffering, and ignominy? What seems to be less fitted to destroy a tyrannical power, such as that of the devil, and to triumph over spiritual wickedness, than the humiliation and weakness of the Son of God, his reed, and his cross, and his crown of thorns? It is in this way, however, that God has accomplished the great and admirable work of redemption. Our strength has arisen from weakness, our life from death, our glory from ignominy; and our adoption has been the fruit of the abandonment which the only begotten Son of God suffered on the part of his Father. Satan had his mystery, for he concealed our destruction under splendid appearances. God was pleased to have his mystery, but in a manner the very opposite from that of the devil. The one is a mystery of death, the other a mystery of life. The one is a mystery of hatred, the other a mystery of mercy. Thus God was pleased that the economy of Jesus Christ upon earth should be a mystery, an admirable mystery, elevated far above the ways of reason, and bearing the appearance of folly to the carnal mind.

“After that in” (by, or through the display of) “the wisdom of God, the world, by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” From the despised country of

Judea, the light of the nations at length shone forth. "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people. But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

And now how great is the change which the gospel has effected in the world! The base superstitions of Pagan idolatry are banished, and true knowledge is diffused. The Gospel contains representations of God and man, and of a present and future life, entirely unlike any thing known among the civilized heathens, previous to its publication; and to this knowledge men of every rank and condition have access. The Scriptures, from beginning to end, are delivered in a manner level to the capacity of all. From their first publication, they were not only open to the people, but all were enjoined to read and to study them. Instead of communicating the truth of God to a small number of their followers, the Apostles of Jesus Christ proclaimed it publicly. They commanded all men every where to turn from idols. They denounced the crime of idolatry, and declared the punishment which will fall upon those who are guilty of it; they condemned the vices which were practised in the worship of false gods; and in this manner exposing themselves to the most cruel persecutions, they at last submitted to death with a joy and courage which triumphed over their sufferings. So far from acting like the heathen philosophers, who systematically excluded their fellow-creatures from the means of infor-

mation, all those who were sent of God to reveal his will, delivered their instructions to the whole of the people. It is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Messiah's reign, that "to the poor the gospel is preached."

The most unlearned Christian possesses knowledge to which the wisest men of ancient times were wholly strangers. Ask him concerning his soul, he will aver that it is immortal; that it shall undergo a judgment after this life; that, accordingly, it shall abide in a state of bliss or misery everlasting, — points, about which neither Socrates nor Seneca could answer any thing. Enquire of him how all things are upheld, how governed, and ordered? He will presently reply, by the powerful hand and wise providence of God. Whereas, among philosophers, one would ascribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune; one to the blind influences of the stars, another to a confused jumble of atoms. Ask him about the main points of morality and duty, and he will, in a few words, give a better reply than Cicero, or Epictetus, or Aristotle, or Plutarch, in their large tracts and voluminous discourses about matters of that nature. So real a property it is of God's law, "to give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion." So true is what the Lord affirmeth of himself, "I am come a light into the world, that he who believeth in me may not abide in darkness."

With the idolatry and superstition of the heathens, the gospel has put an end to many of their corrupt practices. It has banished much of the cruelty which they encouraged, such as the exposure of infants, the shows of gladiators, the murdering of captives taken

in war, domestic slavery, human sacrifices, and many gross abominations. Its spirit is directly opposed to the ideas of all the Pagan moralists, who represent the desire of revenge as a mark of a noble mind, and to whom the duty of the forgiveness of injuries, and the love of our enemies, was unknown. It has raised the standard of morals, and effected much, even where it has interposed no express injunction; while the purity of its doctrine, the authority of its precepts, and the energy of its sanctions, produce important effects on multitudes, who yet have only the name of Christian. But, above all, the true character and situation of man in the present state, the remedy provided for guilt, and the way of acceptance with God, respecting all of which the civilized heathen world, having almost entirely lost sight of early tradition,* were in total darkness, are now made known. "Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel."

The necessity, then, of a supernatural and divine revelation is manifest. The experiment of reformation without it had long been tried among the most civilized nations on earth. Learning and philosophy had done their utmost, and all had failed. Where is the city or village, since the world began, that was ever enlightened in the knowledge of God, by either heathen or infidel philosophers? It is the doctrine of the fishermen of Galilee which has subverted the altars and dispelled the darkness of Paganism. The Christian who

* Many of the ancient heathens were candid enough to profess to have derived what knowledge they had, not merely from the exertions of their reason, but from a higher source, even from ancient tradition, to which they usually assigned a divine origin.

reads the Bible, borrows no light to his system from the writings of such men as Hume and Voltaire. And were he not, in some measure, acquainted with the deep depravity of the human heart, he would be astonished that, under the meridian light of divine revelation, their sentiments in religion should have been so perverse and so crude.

CHAPTER II.

THE PERSECUTING SPIRIT OF PAGANISM.

HAVING said so much respecting the religion and practice of the heathen world, it is proper, before taking leave of the subject, to notice what has been called the "mild and tolerating spirit of polytheism," a character, on account of which its votaries have been so much applauded. If it were true that Pagan idolaters really deserve the credit which they have on this account obtained, it would be a striking contrast to all the other effects of their depraved superstition. But although the fact of their religious toleration be strongly insisted on by some, and too easily conceded by others, it is entirely without foundation.

The Pagan religion presented the extraordinary spectacle of more than thirty thousand gods; and at Rome alone, six hundred different kinds of sacred rites were exercised. It is true that, as far as respected their religious opinions, the worshippers of these gods, and the observers of these rites, lived together in peace. At first view this appears extremely amiable; it seems

to warrant all that has been said to prove that the most unbounded toleration prevailed. But, on closer inspection, this beautiful appearance vanishes like a cloud. Although some worshipped one set of deities, and others another, yet on the subject of religion there were no opposing opinions among them. The existence and the power of their several deities were equally acknowledged by all; and not one of those numerous religions ever pretended to accuse another of falsehood.

The Romans adopted the gods of the different countries which they conquered, recognising them as the tutelary deities of their several districts, and believing it to be their duty, as well as their interest, to render them homage. So firmly were they persuaded of this, that when they laid siege to any town, it was usual to invoke the tutelary god of the place, and to endeavour, by promising him equal or greater honours than he then enjoyed, to bribe him to betray his former votaries.* Hence it is evident that there was no room for persecution on the subject of religion. Men could not persecute others for serving gods whom they themselves acknowledged, and in similar circumstances worshipped; especially as these others were equally ready to invoke the gods whom they adored. The peace, then, which subsisted among heathens, on the subject of their idolatrous worship, had nothing whatever to do with toleration. It was the necessary result of their indiscriminating notions of Polytheism.

“The various modes of worship,” says Mr Gibbon,

* The Tyrians, when besieged by Alexander, put chains on the statue of Hercules, to prevent that deity from deserting to the enemy.

“ which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful. The devout polytheist, though fondly attached to his national rites, admitted, with implicit faith, the different religions of the earth. The thin texture of Pagan mythology was interwoven with various, but not discordant materials. The deities of a thousand groves and a thousand streams, possessed in peace their local and respective influence. Nor could the Roman, who deprecated the wrath of the Tiber, deride the Egyptian, who presented his offering to the beneficent genius of the Nile. The visible powers of nature, the planets and the elements, were the same throughout the universe. The invisible governors of the moral world were inevitably cast in a similar mould of fiction and allegory. The Greek, the Roman, and the barbarian, as they met before their respective altars, easily persuaded themselves, that, under various names, and with various ceremonies, they adored the same deities.”

If this representation of the case be just, where was the boasted toleration of Polytheism? On the other hand, sufficient provision was made for the legal exercise of intolerance, both in Greece and in Rome. By the laws of Athens, no strange god was admitted, or foreign worship allowed, till approved and licensed by the Court of Areopagus. Every citizen was bound by oath to defend and conform to the religion of his country. This oath was in the name of the gods, and concluded thus: “ I swear by these following deities, the Agrauli, Enyalios, Mars, Jupiter, the Earth, and Diana.” The Romans had a law to the same effect. Livy mentions it as an established principle of the early

ages of the commonwealth, to guard against the introduction of foreign ceremonies of religion. He says that the prohibiting all foreign religions, and the abolishing every mode of sacrifice that differed from the Roman mode, was a business frequently intrusted by their ancestors to the care of the proper magistrates. For nothing, he observes, could contribute so effectually to the ruin of religion, as the sacrificing after an external rite, and not after the manner instituted by their fathers. At an early period, the ædiles were commanded to take care that no gods were worshipped except the Roman gods, and that the Roman gods were worshipped after no manner but the established manner of the country. Mæcenas recommended to Augustus to worship the gods himself according to the established form, and to *force* all others to do the same; and to *hate* and to *punish* all those who should attempt to introduce foreign religions. It is obvious then that the Roman custom, of adopting the gods of other countries, while it indicates the extent of their superstition, or the use they made of religion as a state engine, can never show that the religion of individuals, where it differed from the religion of their country, was either connived at as a matter of indifference, or tolerated as an inalienable right of human nature.

In so far as religious persecution did not take place among the Pagans, it was owing to this,—that there was no opportunity or temptation to persecute. But when the Christian religion, which differed from the established worship, and required toleration, and which, from the acknowledged peaceableness and loyal demeanour of Christians, was every way entitled to it, began to gain ground, it was immediately manifest that such

a principle as religious toleration had no place in the minds of Pagans. What Gibbon calls "the mild spirit of Polytheism" was then put to the test; and Christians soon found, that any thing but toleration was to be expected. At first, indeed, persecution was in different places begun by the multitude, and Christians did not, for a while, attract the particular notice of the Roman government. But at length it commenced in that quarter, and, except at intervals, did not remit for nearly three hundred years; after which the persecutions of Paganism ceased with its power.

Tacitus informs us, that the Emperor Nero inflicted exquisite punishments on those people who, he says, were abhorred for their crimes, and were commonly known by the name of Christians. "They were condemned," he tells us, "not so much for the crime of burning the city" (which Nero had falsely laid to their charge), "as for their enmity to mankind." Their sufferings, too, were so contrived, that they should be exposed to scorn, and their misery rendered ridiculous. "For this purpose," he adds, "they were enclosed in the skins of wild beasts, that they might be torn to pieces by dogs; or else they were fastened to crosses. Others were appointed to be set on fire; and it was so ordered, that they should, after they had been in torment all day, serve for lights by night." One should suppose that this historian, after stating such things, and adding that they were "really criminal, and deserving exemplary punishment," would have brought forward some proof of their enmity to mankind, and given an account of the crimes for which they were held in abhorrence. But not a word of this appears. No such crimes, it is well known, existed; yet, in the

spirit of a persecutor, he joins in the clamour against them, and, without a shadow of reason, asserts, that “they were deserving of exemplary punishment.”

It may be said, however, that this is an example of persecution and intolerance under the reign of a tyrant, whose cruelty is proverbial. Let us, then, turn to the situation of Christians under one who was esteemed the best and greatest of the Roman Emperors,—Trajan, to whom the title of “Optimus” was given by the senate and the people. Under his reign, the third persecution began in the year 100. About the year 106 Pliny, the younger, was appointed governor of Bithynia. The character of Pliny, as well as that of Trajan, is highly celebrated; and perhaps two men more deservedly esteemed, could not be selected from among the heathens. But the situation of Christians under these men was dreadful. Of this we have the most authentic evidence, under their own hands.

As soon as Pliny arrived in his province, he wrote to the emperor for direction how to proceed in the trials of the Christians. In his letter, which the reader will afterwards see at full length under the article of “Testimonies from public edicts,” Pliny declares he does not well know what is the subject either of punishment or of enquiry; what strictness ought to be used in either; whether any difference ought to be made on account of age; whether repentance should entitle to pardon; and whether the name itself, although no crimes were detected, ought to be punished. “Concerning all these things,” he says, “I am in doubt.” In the mean time he informs the Emperor, that he had put the question to all who were accused, whether they were Christians? “Upon confessing that they were,

I repeated the question a second and a third time, threatening also to punish them with death. Such as still persisted I ordered away to be punished; *for it was no doubt with me*, that whatever might be the nature of their opinion, contumacy and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished." He farther says, "that he had received anonymous information against several persons, who, upon examination, denied that they were Christians, or ever had been so; who repeated," he adds, "after me an invocation of the gods, and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image, —none of which things, as is said, they who are really Christians can by any means be compelled to do." He then gives the account he had heard of their mode of worship and orderly behaviour, and of their binding themselves to the strictest integrity in conduct. He had put to the torture two maid-servants (deaconesses) who belonged to them, to try what he could learn. "But," says he, "I have discovered nothing but a bad and excessive superstition." From Pliny's letter we also learn, that these severities were not the commencement, but the continuation of persecution.

Trajan, in his answer, declares, that Pliny had taken the *right method* in his proceedings with those Christians who had been brought before him. Only he directs that they should not be sought for,* and that anonymous accusations should not be received; and

* Tertullian ridicules this decree of Trajan, as inconsistent and contradictory. "He forbids the Christians to be sought for, supposing them to be innocent; and he orders them to be punished as guilty. If they are criminal, why should they not be sought for? If they are not to be sought for, why should they not be absolved?"

“ if any one denies being a Christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is by *supplicating to our gods*, though he be suspected to have been so formerly, let him be pardoned *upon repentance*.” These are all the limitations which were allowed in favour of the unoffending Christians ; against whom Pliny, after all the pains he had taken, and the information he had received, could alledge nothing, but their firm adherence to the worship of God, according to their conscience. On the other hand, the Emperor adds, “ If any are brought before you, and are convicted, they ought to be punished ;” and they were to be pardoned only on condition that they renounced their religion.

We have here a specimen of the vaunted toleration of Pagans. Where no crime is alleged ; where, on the contrary, innocence and good conduct are unequivocally admitted, there remains “ no doubt” with him who is called the “ humane Pliny,” that Christians should be punished *with death*, on account of their “ bad and excessive superstition ;” that is, merely for their religion, and their “ inflexible obstinacy” in not making supplication to “ our gods,” and among the rest to the image of Trajan. All this, Trajan, who is in other respects justly admired for his excellent and equitable government, confirms, and commands to be executed. Whatever might be the nature of their opinions, whether good or bad, provided they were different from the Pagan religion, those who consistently adhered to them were to suffer death.

Under Marcus Antoninus, another of the most distinguished of the Roman emperors, the Christians were severely persecuted. Athenagoras, in his apology, presented to the Emperor in the year 178, tells him that

all other people experienced the benefit of his equitable government. "But we Christians," says he, "because no regard is had to us, nor any provision made for us, though we do no evil, and are in all things obedient to the divine Being and your government, are harassed and persecuted for the name only. We therefore entreat you to take care of us, that we may no longer be put to death by sycophants."

The spirit of persecution was not confined to the emperors. It manifested itself on every opportunity among the whole body of the people. The governors of the provinces sometimes went beyond the commands of the emperors, and issued public orders that strict search should be made for Christians. The common cry of the people at their public shows was, "The Christians to the lions." They thirsted after their blood like the savage beasts to which they desired to expose them, and were even more forward than their governors to inflict on them the most dreadful tortures. Among these was the uncus, or hook, the eculeus, the palus and stipes, upon which they seem to have been impaled; also the iron chair, which was made hot, and the victims placed on it. But the most common, and to the spectators the favourite punishment, was that of exposing the Christians to the wild beasts in the circus, to be torn to pieces. Such was what has been called, "The mild and tolerating spirit of Polytheism."

Gibbon assigns it as a reason, why, under the Roman government, the Jews enjoyed a measure of religious freedom, while the Christians were so violently persecuted, that the former were a nation, the latter were a sect. But this is not a true account of the matter. On the principles of Paganism, indeed, the God of the Jews

was allowed to be the tutelary deity of their country, and in this view, besides that the Jews did not attempt to make proselytes, they were not so obnoxious to the persecution of Pagan Polytheists. But the real cause of the difference in question can only be found in that enmity against the author of the gospel, and his followers and doctrine, to which he himself so often referred. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you; if ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The above observation, however, contains a plain acknowledgment, by Mr Gibbon himself, of the vanity of his plea for the tolerating spirit of Polytheism. Can that be called toleration which extends only to strangers, and not to persons who form a part of the community in which they reside? "The Jews," he says, "were a *nation*, the Christians were a *sect*; and if it was natural for every community to respect the sacred institutions of their neighbours, it was incumbent on them to persevere in those of their ancestors. The voice of oracles, the precepts of philosophers, and the authority of the laws, *unanimously* enforced this national obligation." The principle of persecution which actuated the Pagans, is thus not only avowed, but justified. Mr Gibbon's sophistry is here very palpable, but it may mislead the unwary. The want of toleration in persecuting idolaters, is vindicated by him on the shallow pretence of its being incumbent on them to persevere in the sacred institutions of their ancestors, as if they would have been prevented from doing so by allowing others to act according to their conscience; and on the unprincipled

plea, that it was “*natural*” for them to persevere in the “*sacred institutions*” of their ancestors. The *sacred* institutions of their ancestors, however wicked and impious, and even absurd, are thus pleaded, by this apologist for idolaters and traducer of Christians, as a legitimate ground for not suffering men to act according to their consciences. Let those who are in danger of being bewildered by his writings, contrast this sentiment with the manner in which prophets and apostles, whom he affects to despise, express themselves. Undazzled by the false glare of ancient usages, and abhorring the guilt of employing them as a cover for injustice, or an apology for sin, “We acknowledge, O Lord,” says a prophet, “our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers.”—Jer. xiv. 20. While an apostle reminds believers of their “vain conversation, received by tradition from their fathers.”—1 Peter, i. 18.

Notwithstanding Mr Gibbon’s strong desire to explain the fact of the persecution of Christians in such a way as still to support his false allegation as to what he calls “the mild spirit of Polytheism,” yet the truth sometimes escapes him. “The pious Christian,” he observes, “as he was desirous to obtain or to escape the glory of martyrdom, expected, either with impatience or with terror, the stated returns of the public games and festivals. On these occasions, the inhabitants of the great cities of the empire were collected in the circus or the theatre, where every circumstance of the place, as well as of the ceremony, contributed to kindle their devotion, and to extinguish their humanity; whilst the numerous spectators, crowned with garlands, perfumed with incense, purified with the blood of victims, and surrounded with the altars and statues of their

tutelary deities, resigned themselves to the enjoyment of pleasures, which they considered as an essential part of their religious worship. They recollected that the Christians alone abhorred the gods of mankind, and by their absence and melancholy on these solemn festivals, seemed to insult or to lament the public felicity.—It was not among a licentious and exasperated populace that the forms of legal proceedings could be observed ; it was not in an amphitheatre, stained with the blood of wild beasts and gladiators, that the voice of compassion could be heard. The impatient clamours of the multitude denounced the Christians as the enemies of gods and men, doomed them to the severest tortures, and venturing to accuse by name some of the most distinguished of the new sectaries, required, with irresistible vehemence, that they should be instantly apprehended, and cast to the lions.”—Speaking of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, Gibbon says, “ During the whole course of his reign, Marcus despised the Christians as a philosopher, *and punished them as a sovereign.*” I shall only add one quotation more, but it is decisive on the question : “ It was in vain that the oppressed believer asserted the unalienable rights of conscience and private judgment. Though his situation might excite the pity, his *arguments could never reach the understanding, either of the philosophic or of the believing part of the Pagan world.*”

Where is now the “ mild spirit of Polytheism,” and that universal toleration by which the Pagans are asserted to have been so much distinguished ? On the contrary, there did not exist among them even its shadow. But this false plea in favour of heathenism is eagerly brought forward by such writers as Gib-

bon and Hume. "So sociable," says Mr Hume, "is Polytheism, that the utmost fierceness and aversion it meets with in an opposite religion, is scarce able to disgust and keep it at a distance." Such is the utter disregard of truth evinced by this author, when, in attempting to undermine the Christian religion, he exalts the system of Polytheism. Although he was fully aware of the fierce and unrelenting persecutions of Christians by Pagan idolaters for 300 years, that is, as long as it was in their power, yet he affirms that the spirit of the latter was so mild as not to be disgusted or kept at a distance by the "utmost *fierceness*" in an opposite religion; while he speaks of "the tolerating spirit of idolaters" as "very obvious," and says, "that the intolerance of almost all religions which have maintained the unity of God, is as remarkable as the contrary principle of Polytheists."

When Mr Hume contrasts "the tolerating principle of idolaters" with the "intolerance of *almost* all religions that have maintained the unity of God," the exception "almost" is used merely for a cover, and is not intended to exonerate the Christian religion. Accordingly, he soon after includes Christianity in the charge, by an indirect accusation against it, drawn from the conduct of Christians. "If," says he, "amongst Christians, the English and Dutch have embraced the principles of toleration, this singularity has proceeded from the steady resolution of the civil magistrate, in opposition to the continued efforts of priests and bigots." Our attention is thus called to the tolerating principle of idolaters, and the intolerance of the Christian religion; and we are informed, that if any Christians "have embraced the principles of toleration, this

singularity has proceeded from the steady resolution of the civil magistrate." In opposition to this, however, let us now learn from Mr Hume himself, in another part of his writings, to whom "so reasonable a doctrine," as that of toleration, OWED ITS ORIGIN.

In his History of England, Mr Hume, in narrating the events of 1644, and speaking of the Independents in that country, observes, "Of all the Christian sects, this was the first which, during its prosperity as well as its adversity, always adopted the principle of toleration. *And it is remarkable, that so reasonable a doctrine owed its origin, not to reasoning, but to the height of extravagance and fanaticism.*" Here, notwithstanding all he has said in his Essay on the tolerating principle of Polytheists, exalting, in this respect, Paganism at the expense of Christianity, he now informs us, that *more than a thousand years after Paganism had ceased to exist*, the doctrine of toleration *owed its ORIGIN*, not to the reasoning of philosophers or to Polytheists, but to a sect of Christians. Fanaticism and the Christian religion are, with this writer, synonymous terms. When men act dishonestly, it seldom happens that they are able to maintain consistency.

The servants of Jesus Christ may defy the most perspicacious opposers of their religion, to point out one word in the Bible that gives the smallest countenance to intolerance. Here Christians can meet their opposers on fair and open ground—ground, however, which they seldom choose to occupy. Were it possible for them to do so with any success, they would not resort to that underhand kind of warfare which Gibbon and Hume were incessantly carrying on in their writings against the Christian religion;—attacking it with the

weapons of ridicule and misrepresentation, through the faults or mistakes of Christians. Their ignorance of the nature of the religion they opposed, which is manifest in all they say on the subject, precluded them from acting the part of fair and honourable adversaries. It is mentioned, in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, that Mr Hume told a clergyman at Durham, that he had never read the New Testament with attention. Whether he did so or not, it is certain that he grossly misunderstood its contents.

Thus, we have Mr Hume's unequivocal testimony, that the "reasonable doctrine" of toleration owed its origin to Christians. He is mistaken, however, in assigning its discovery to so late a period. He ought to have known that it was maintained by some of the early Christians, and should have traced it primarily to the Word of God. But even according to Mr Hume, it is no more to be sought for among Pagan idolators. It is a principle too refined to have emanated from such a source. Like innumerable other blessings to society, it flowed from the Christian religion; and although religious intolerance may be charged on mistaken Christians, it never can be laid to the charge of Christianity itself. Christianity has nothing to do with the persecutions of Madrid and Rome, of which Mr Hume, in his *Essay on Toleration*, reminds his readers, nor with those which have taken place in any country. Christianity never sanctioned the shedding of one drop of blood, either in its propagation or in its defence. The Emperor Julian himself, the great opponent of Christianity, declares, that "Jesus and Paul gave no such precept."

The apostle Peter, before he was well instructed in

the nature of his religion, once drew his sword to defend his master ; but Jesus said unto him, " Put up again thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels ?" He thus intimated to Peter, and to all his followers to the end of time, that he did not commit to them weapons of violence to defend his kingdom ; and that, if he needed assistance in this matter, he would not make use of such precarious means as the power of men, but would employ more efficient instruments.

" The weapons of our warfare," said the apostle Paul, " are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds ;" and so they proved, in opposition to all the powers of the world. Whoever then knows and recollects, that, " except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," and that " no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," will not suppose that shedding a man's blood, or using violence of any kind, is the way to convert him, and to make him obedient to God. There is no need of laboured essays on toleration, to prove to the Christian who studies the Word of God, that he must not dare to use violence to promote the cause of the Gospel. Liberty of conscience to all men from each other is there written as with a sunbeam. And whenever real Christians, misled by the prejudices of the age in which they lived, or giving way to the depraved principles natural to the human heart, have resorted to carnal weapons to propagate their religion, they have always erred grievously from the faith, and have generally pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

On the whole, the violent persecutions to which Christians were subjected during the first three centuries, is a fact acknowledged even by those who most strenuously contend for Pagan toleration. The principles of all the other religions which the heathen world embraced, were at bottom really one. All of them agreed to treat sin with lenity, and to allow one another's religion to be right on the whole. Even those philosophers who laughed at their religious rites, themselves conformed to them; and they had no system of their own to bring forward which radically opposed the prevailing superstitions. Amidst such agreement, the absence of persecution does not deserve the name of toleration. Far less was it a proof of that mild spirit which has been falsely ascribed to Paganism. As soon as Christianity appeared, the most virulent opposition was excited, which issued in a system of the most cruel persecution.

It is always to be recollected that this persecution was purely of a religious nature. There was nothing political in it, not even the pretence of any thing of the kind. The Christians under the Roman empire were the most peaceable citizens. Their submission to government, strictly enjoined upon them by the Scriptures, formed a prominent part of their religion. Never were the principles of any set of men put to so severe a test. From the increase of their numbers they came at length to possess the means of opposition, had they chosen to employ them. But this they never attempted.

To whatever cause the persecution that Christians suffered as long as Paganism predominated may be attributed, the evidence which it furnishes to the truth

of the Christian religion is peculiarly strong. We are immediately reminded by it of the full and distinct intimations which the Lord gave to his disciples beforehand of what they were to suffer for his sake. We see also a reason for his solemn warning, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him also will I confess before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him also will I deny before my Father which is heaven."

There was nothing which the Lord Jesus Christ more constantly inculcated upon his disciples than the unfriendly reception, and even violent opposition, which they should every where meet with, in propagating his doctrine. This was the more necessary, as it was probably what they did not expect. In becoming the messengers of the glad tidings of salvation to mankind, and in seeking to diffuse the mild, humble, and benevolent spirit of Christianity, they must naturally anticipate that wherever they went they should be received with respect and kindness. But he who "knew what was in man," foresaw how different their reception would be. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather division; For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three."—"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?"—"The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against the parents, and cause them to be put to death; and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."—"Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves."—"Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony

against them and the Gentiles.”—“ They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons ; being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake ; *and it shall turn to you for a testimony.*”—“ Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.”

The force of the evidence arising from these predictions, which in the sufferings of the first Christians, were literally verified, cannot be set aside. No one, without divine foreknowledge, could have foreseen that persecutions so violent would arise. From the various ways in which unbelievers at this day endeavour to account for it, and from the surprise which they discover that they should have taken place, we see that the ablest of them would never have dreamed of it beforehand. The early Christians particularly observed and pointed out the striking evidence which thence arose to the truth of their religion. They speak of it as a wonderful notice that Jesus Christ had given to his disciples, that they should be brought before kings for his sake. “ Is there any other doctrine in the world,” says Origen, “ whose followers are punished ? Can the enemies of Christ say that he knew his opinions were false and impious, and that therefore he might well conjecture and foretell what would be the treatment of those persons who should embrace them ? Supposing his doctrines were really such, why should this be the consequence ? What likelihood was there that men should be brought before kings and governors for opinions and tenets of any kind, when this never happened even to the Epicureans, who absolutely denied a providence, nor to the Peripatetics themselves,

who laughed at the prayers and sacrifices which were made to the Divinity? Are there any but the Christians, who, according to this prediction of our Saviour, being brought before kings and governors for his sake, are pressed, to their latest gasp of death, by their respective judges to renounce Christianity, and to procure their liberty and rest, by offering the same sacrifices, and taking the same oaths that others did? As for us, when we see, every day, those events exactly accomplished which our Saviour foretold at so great a distance, that his Gospel is preached in all the world, Matt. xxiv. 14,—that his disciples go and teach all nations, Matt. xxviii. 19,—and that those who have received his doctrine are brought, for his sake, before governors and before kings, Matt. x. 18,—we are filled with admiration, and our faith in him is confirmed more and more.”

And now, in these latter times, additional testimony on this subject presents itself. We have observed the manner in which Mr Hume and Mr Gibbon, who have distinguished themselves so much among the most inveterate and insidious enemies of the gospel, have studiously misrepresented the subject of the alleged tolerating spirit of Paganism. In them, therefore, is that declaration fulfilled, “*There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.*” 2 Peter, iii. 3. If, then, in the early days of the church, the persecuting spirit of the world, so clearly predicted by the Lord, turned to the first Christians for a testimony, shall not this other prediction contained in his word and literally verified in our time, turn in like manner to us for a testimony? In order to falsify the prediction of Jesus Christ, and to vilify his religion, by

showing it to be more destructive to every right feeling of the mind of man than all the abominations and absurdities of Pagan idolatry, Mr Gibbon and Mr Hume have laboured with all their might. But “the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are foolishness.” “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” Again it is written, “He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.” Of this we have before us a very remarkable example. These same scoffers, being included in the prophetic annunciations of that book, which, walking after their own lusts, it was their settled purpose to overthrow, but which they have unconsciously verified, are here summoned as unexceptionable witnesses against themselves. “Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.” But while the truth of the Scriptures is thus confirmed, it is impossible to overlook the deep criminality of those writers, who, in the indulgence of their enmity against the Christian religion, and in direct opposition to what they *knew* to be the fact, have celebrated the “mild and sociable spirit of Polytheism.”

CHAPTER III.

THE CREDIBILITY OF MIRACLES.

TESTIMONY conveys to us the greatest part of our knowledge of actual existence, and its evidence may arise to such a height, as to be perfectly equivalent to

that of sense or demonstration,* A man who has never travelled out of Great Britain, is by testimony alone, as much convinced of the existence of China and America, as he is of the existence of this country in which he resides. No one seriously doubts that there was such a city as ancient Rome, and that its empire flourished under certain forms of government. Its history has been recorded in the works of several writers, and these, bearing the stamp of antiquity, and the impress of truth, have been transmitted to the present time from distant ages. Certain subordinate circumstances in these histories may be feigned or misrepresented. But there are leading facts which none call in question. All, for instance, are convinced that there existed such a man as Julius Cæsar; that he lived about the time which history testifies; that he wrote commentaries of many of his exploits; and that he gave rise to a new form of government, which continued for ages, and produced very important effects. The truth of these events is so firmly established by the general and concurrent testimony of history, that were certain learned men now to arise, and, without being able to produce any ancient contradictory statements, to endeavour to destroy their authority, it would argue the greatest folly and weakness to be moved by their reasonings. In like manner, the truth of other facts which happened in distant periods is substantiated, and upon such evidence almost the whole business and intercourse of human life is conducted.

* Probable evidence is essentially distinguished from demonstrative by this, that it admits of degrees, and of all variety of them, from the very lowest presumption to the highest moral certainty.

On the same grounds of historical testimony, but furnished to us in a measure far more extensive, and connected, moreover, with a variety of other kinds of evidence, we are assured of the fact, that Jesus Christ appeared in the world, and that he was born, and lived, and died in the country of Judea. This is attested by contemporary historians ; and no man acquainted with history can be so absurd as to admit the reality of the existence of Julius Cæsar, and at the same time to deny that of Jesus of Nazareth. This fact is admitted by the greatest enemies to Christianity ; and it is also acknowledged on all hands, that the Christian religion, which is professed at this day, took its rise from Jesus Christ, and in the age in which he lived : Till then it is never mentioned ; but from that period it begins to be noticed by historians, it shortly after becomes the subject of public edicts, and afterwards produces revolutions in government, both more important and more permanent than that which Julius Cæsar effected.

To diminish the force of this statement, it may be said that, while it cannot be denied that we have the same kind of evidence for the fact of the existence of Jesus Christ as of Julius Cæsar, yet the whole tenor of the history of the latter is according to the common course of events, while that of the former is entirely different. It is true that the history of Julius Cæsar presents nothing dissimilar to the appearances we constantly witness, and what is related of him readily accounts for all that he accomplished. But it is also true that, while the Divine mission of Jesus Christ must, from its nature, like the creation of the world, stand alone, the miracles that accompanied his life, and attested his doctrine, consisted of matters of fact,

which, being evident to the senses of those who witnessed them, and of such a nature that they could not be mistaken, are, equally with common occurrences, the subjects of credible testimony.

It has, indeed, been laid down as a maxim by some, that no human testimony is sufficient to prove a miracle, which has been defined to be a work in which the stated laws of nature are departed from, suspended, or controlled. But if human testimony cannot be admitted as a proof of this, it must be because such a work is in its nature either *impossible* or *incredible*.

Respecting the *impossibility* of miracles, if by the stated laws of nature be meant a physical necessity, under which God acts, it is evident that in this case there could be no such thing as a miracle ; but this is absolute atheism. To affirm, then, that a suspension or alteration of the laws of nature is impossible, is to confer on them the attributes of Deity, and to declare that they are supreme ; and their having no superior, precludes the existence of God as well as of miracles, or it represents him as subordinate to his own laws. But whoever believes in the being and omnipotence of God, must be convinced that he has power to interfere in his own works, and to make such interference manifest, and likewise to alter or suspend those laws by which he is pleased usually to regulate them. Yet, when this is admitted, an idea seems to prevail, that the world has been so formed, and its laws so permanently fixed, that, after once being set in order, all proceeds of itself like the motion of a machine, in the absence, and without the interference, of him who constructed it. This, indeed, is the perfection of any work of man, who, owing to his limited nature, can only be

present in one place, and employed in one way, at the same time. But such an idea is totally inapplicable to the Supreme Being.

The Scriptures represent God to be infinite. Vast as we believe the universe to be, it has its bounds, but we must go beyond them to conceive of God. "The heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him."—"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? As high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." We cannot conceive of God but as every where present, and upholding all things by the word of his power. This can occasion to him no weariness, no distraction, no waste. "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."—"Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" All of the Scripture histories represent God as working on the right hand and on the left, though men do not discern him, and as constantly maintaining and directing all things. Without him, "not a sparrow falls to the ground."—"My Father," says Jesus Christ, "worketh hitherto, and I work." These descriptions accord with every idea we can form of God, and this belief of his constant operation, is far more consistent than the notion that certain laws were at first impressed on matter, which, under the name of the course of nature, continue to operate, without the interference of the Creator. For what is the course of nature but the agency of God? It has been justly denied, that the course of nature is a proper active cause, which will

work and go on by itself without God, if he permits it. The course of nature, separate from the agency of God, is no cause, or nothing. It is impossible that it should continue of itself, or go on to operate by itself, any more than to produce itself. God, the original cause of all being, is the only cause of all natural effects. In the words of Sir Isaac Newton, "It is the will of the mind that is the *first cause*, that gives subsistence and efficacy to all these *laws*; who is the *efficient cause* that produces the *phenomena* which appear in analogy, harmony, and agreement, according to these laws."

"In compliance with custom," says Dr Reid, "or perhaps to gratify the avidity of knowing the causes of things, we call the laws of nature causes and active powers. So we speak of the powers of gravitation, of magnetism, of electricity. We call them causes of many of the phenomena of nature; and such they are esteemed by the ignorant and half learned. But those of juster discernment see that laws of nature are not agents. They are not endowed with active power, and therefore cannot be causes in the proper sense."

"The reason," says Warburton, "why men so readily admit the natural government of God, while they deny his moral government, is, that the former is thought to be kept in order only by the general laws of mechanism impressed on matter at its creation; so that here he works neither immediately nor particularly, but leaves every thing to the government of these general laws. This supposed distance and separation of the great artist from his work, after having once set the machine agoing by the first impression of his general laws, is the gratuitous conclusion of a talking

philosophy. The latter and more correct enquiries into the material system, on the unerring experience of the Newtonian physics, have clearly discovered that God is intimately present to every particle of matter, at every point of space, and in every instance of being. For a *vis inerticæ*, or resistance to the change of its present state, being an essential quality of matter, and inconsistent with any motive force, or power in that substance, all those effects commonly ascribed to a certain essence residing in it, such as gravity, attraction, elasticity, repulsion, or whatever other tendencies to motion are observed in matter, are not powers naturally belonging to it, or what can possibly be made inherent in it; so that these qualities, without which matter would be utterly unfit for use, must needs be produced by the immediate influence of the First Cause, incessantly performing, by his Almighty finger, the minutest office in the material economy, working still near us, round us, within us, and in every part of us." What is called the usual course of nature, then, is nothing else but the will of God, producing certain effects in a continued, regular, constant, and uniform manner; which course or manner of acting being in every moment perfectly arbitrary, is as easy to be altered at any time as to be preserved.

It is only atheism, therefore, in one form or other, which, inducing men to deny that God has power to interfere in the regulation of his own works, leads to the conclusion, that a miracle, or a departure from, or suspension of, the usual course of his proceedings, is impossible. On any ground, indeed, to assert the impossibility of a miracle, is absurd; for no man can prove, nor is there any reason to believe, that to

work a miracle is a greater exertion of power than those usual operations which we daily witness. To restore life to a dead body, and to bring it forth from the grave, is not attended with more difficulty than to communicate life to a fœtus, and to bring it forth from the womb. Both are equally beyond the power of man; both are equally possible with God. In respect of the power of God, all things are alike easy to be done by him. The power of God extends equally to great things as to small, and to many as to few, and the one makes no more difficulty, or resistance to his will, than the other. The idea that any successful resistance can arise to the will and operation of God, either from mind or from matter, is absurd.

If the *possibility* of miracles cannot be denied, there can be but one other ground for the assertion that they cannot be proved by human testimony, namely, that in their nature they are *incredible*. But this can never be established. It is readily admitted that the manner in which God acts in upholding the universe is the best possible, and that its uniformity and regularity are the result of infinite wisdom. This uniformity and regularity are likewise necessary, in order that, by comparing the future with the past, we may know what to anticipate, and how we ought to conduct ourselves; and were there no such regularity, there could be no miracle. But if all this arrangement is ordered, as we must believe, for the improvement and happiness of the moral world, then, so far from being *incredible*, it is in the highest degree *probable*, that when any important end is to be attained in the latter, the laws of the natural world, either in their uniform course, or temporary alteration, should be made subservient to it. And this

subserviency of the natural world to the moral system, and the analogy of every part of the divine government, render it so probable, that, when any important end is to be served in the moral world, the laws of the natural world should be made to promote it, that no man can consistently doubt the evidence of testimony on this point.

It is at the same time evident that, if what are called the laws of nature be under the management of a legislator, not only may that legislator modify these laws, but those modifications may be palpable facts, and so become the direct subject of testimony, and of such testimony, that if it could be proved to be false, it would be a more palpable violation of moral order than miracles can in any view be shown to be of natural order. Imposture in a number of men whose aim is evidently virtuous, who persevere with constancy in their testimony, by which they expose themselves to the greatest calamities, and even to death, would undoubtedly be a violation of moral order, and such an exception to its general course as cannot be produced in the history of the world. Human testimony is sufficient for all the purposes of transmitting from generation to generation well authenticated facts, of whatever kind they may be. Testimony is no proof of opinions, but it must be admitted to be a proof of facts; and nothing can destroy the proof of testimony in any case, but a proof or probability that the persons who testify are not competent judges of the facts to which they give testimony, or that they are actually under some operative influence in giving it in such particular case.

There is no conceivable way in which a divine revelation could be made, unless accompanied by miracles.

There is, therefore, the same *probability* of the occurrence of miracles, as there is of a revelation from God, and the same necessity for the one as for the other. If ever the enjoyment of that intercourse with God which man has forfeited, is to be restored, it must obviously be by supernatural means. If God afterwards speaks audibly and visibly to men, it can only be in a way out of the common course. If he sends messengers to declare his will, they must possess credentials to prove that they come from him. If a particular people are made, in the first instance, the depositaries of his written word, and the medium of communication to the rest of the world, and are for this purpose subjected to a singular constitution of civil laws and religious services, that people must be made sensible, by manifest tokens, that in what they thus adopt, in itself so unprecedented, they are not the dupes of artifice and fraud. On the other hand, it could not be expected that these sensible tokens, or marks of Divine interposition, should be renewed in every age, or to every individual in the world. This would be to subvert the established order of things, without answering an adequate end, since, like any other fact, they may be the subject of testimony.

If, however, men, through prejudice or inattention, and from having their minds preoccupied, or from being opposed to the nature of such facts, will not believe them, when transmitted in this way, they would not be convinced of that truth which these tokens or miracles infer, although themselves had been present when they were wrought. The carcasses of that generation which witnessed the thunders of Sinai, and entreated that they might not hear the voice of God any more lest they should

die, fell in the wilderness on account of their unbelief. Some of those Jews who were present at the resurrection of Lazarus, reported it to the enemies of Jesus Christ, with a view to obtain their favour. The Jewish rulers, who witnessed his miracles, and who never denied them, put him to death. The Roman soldiers who guarded the sepulchre, and felt the terrors of Christ's glorious resurrection, accepted a bribe to circulate a false report. An attentive observation of human nature, of the motives which actuate the world, and of the general objects of men's ambition and pursuits, will compel us fully to admit the truth of that weighty declaration, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

The miracles related in the Scriptures, are entirely different from the absurd and insulated pretences to any thing of the kind, either among heathens or others. Who could examine the accounts of the works ascribed to Apollonius Tyanæus; of the Emperor Vespasian's having opened the eyes of a blind man at Alexandria; of the wonders said to be performed at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, which ceased when, in consequence of an order from the king, the sepulchre was enclosed with a wall; or of the French prophets in England, without at once rejecting them? When such counterfeits have been brought forward, as by Hume, to confront the evidence of the miracles of Scripture, their absurdity, their equivocal nature, their total want of adequate evidence and of adequate object, have been again and again exposed. It is not, indeed, to be conceived, that the man who rejects the miracles of Scripture, believes in the truth of those by which they are counterfeited. His object is to bring suspicion on every thing of a similar

kind, by artfully confounding the nature and evidence of what is palpably false, with what he wishes to show not to be true. By this confusion which he creates, the bulk of readers, through indolence, are deterred from further examination, and are led to give up the whole. But if ever the miracles of revelation shall be set aside as incredible, it must be by some other means than by endeavouring to exalt to an equality with them, counterfeits, the base ingredients of which it requires but a small portion of attention and honesty to detect. How differently do men act when their worldly interests are concerned ! for who would refuse to make use of the money current in the land, because the coin of the realm, or the notes of the banker, had been imitated by the forger ?

The sum of Mr Hume's Essay on Miracles, Dr Campbell has shown to be this, "that it is impossible for God Almighty to give a revelation attended with such evidence, that it can be reasonably believed in after ages, or even in the same age, by any person who hath not been an eye-witness of the miracles by which it is supported."—"Now, by what wonderful process of reasoning," he adds, "is this strange conclusion made out?" He then proceeds to examine the reasoning in the Essay, and has not only convicted Mr Hume of *begging the question*, taking for granted the very point in dispute, but has shown that his favourite argument, of which he boasts the discovery, is founded in *error*, managed with *sophistry*, and at last *abandoned* by himself.

Mr Hume, after having asserted that no testimony for *any kind* of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, much less to a proof, and again, that "we may establish it as a maxim, that no human testimony can have such

force as to prove a miracle, and make it a just foundation for any such system of religion," adds, in a note, "I beg the limitation here made may be remarked, when I say, that a miracle can never be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion. For I own that otherwise there may possibly be miracles, or violations* of the usual course of nature, of such a kind as to admit of proof from human testimony." According, then, to Mr Hume himself, miracles may "*admit of proof from human testimony,*" provided they be not brought in support of a system of religion. His exception, with respect to those miracles which are made the foundation of religion, is not only untenable, but completely absurd. For whatever destroys the possibility of proving a miracle in the case of religion, must equally do so in every other case; and whatever shows that miracles in any other case admit of proof from human testimony, equally proves this in the case of religion.

Absurd, however, as Mr Hume's general position is, and untenable as the arbitrary limitation to which he resorts proves it to be, it is not surprising that such efforts have been made on the subject of miracles by those who oppose the truth of the Christian religion; since the miracles to which it appeals are conclusive in its favour, and since "*the religion of the Bible is, of all the religions that have subsisted, or that now sub-*

* Mr Hume has defined a miracle to be a transgression of the laws of nature. The word *transgression*, as well as *violation*, is generally used in a bad sense, as implying a certain degree of vice. This circumstance, it is probable, recommended it to his choice, in order to give a keener edge to his reasoning on the subject.

sist in the world, the only religion which claims to have been attended in its first publication with the evidence of miracles. For though in different ages and countries, numberless enthusiasts have arisen, extremely few have dared to advance this plea; and whenever any have had the boldness to recur to it, it hath proved the bane, and not the support, of their cause." Mr Hume asserts, in his Essay, that men in all ages have been much imposed on by ridiculous stories of miracles ascribed to new systems of religion. To this Dr Campbell replies, "*that there is not the shadow of truth*" in this assertion, and that he is utterly at a loss to conceive what should have induced Mr Hume to advance it. There is then no presumption, arising from the history of the world, which can in the least invalidate the argument from miracles in proof of the truth of Christianity. All miracles, except those wrought in support of the religion of Jesus Christ, have been engines of received superstitions, and artifices intended to keep alive the credulity of the people.

In Mr Hume's Essay, we see the greatest opponent of the credibility of miracles, compelled at last, by the conviction that came home to his own mind, to abandon his general position, and to surrender at once the whole value of that argument which he boasts he had discovered, to show that no testimony can amount to a proof of any kind of miracle, and to limit the whole force of his reasoning to the case of religion. For this limitation, it was out of his power to assign any sufficient reason. When, on the contrary, the nature of religion, and its importance to man, are considered, there is no unprejudiced person but must be convinced, that the case excepted affords the strongest probability of the

existence of extraordinary Divine interposition, and even evinces the necessity of it; in other words, of the display of miracles. Is there any thing in the world so important as religion, which teaches the knowledge of God; in what manner man shall be freed from guilt, received into favour by his Creator, and enabled to render him acceptable service; and on what grounds his happiness shall, after this short and transitory life, be secured through eternity? This is religion; and no occasion can be conceived so important, and so worthy of the display of the Creator's power and interposition, in deviating from those rules by which he usually proceeds in the government of the world, in order to lay a just foundation for a system of religion. Nor does it argue any defect in the Divine plans to suppose, that it should ever be necessary for God to make a special interposition: the conclusion, therefore, that no interposition should ever be made, is not warranted by any sound principle whatever. Miraculous interposition in such a case, as when man had sinned against God, and involved himself in ruin, in darkness, and guilt, discovers consistency in principle, instead of irregularity in government. The wisdom of God is equally evinced by that uniform course which he generally follows in the order of the world, and by those occasional deviations from it when they become subservient to the beneficent purposes of his moral government; while in both of these modes of procedure the exertion of his power is the same.

After all, there *must* be miracles. Not only must we admit that they are both *possible* and *credible*, but the *absolute necessity* of their existence forces itself upon us. "Whether the world *had* or *had not* a be-

ginning; whether, on the *first* supposition, the production of things be ascribed to *chance* or to *design*; whether, on the *second*, in order to solve the numberless objections that arise, we *do*, or *do not*, recur to universal catastrophes, there is no possibility of accounting for the phenomena that presently come under our notice, without having at last recourse to miracles; that is, to events altogether unconformable, or, if you will, contrary to the present course of nature, known to us by experience."

The miracles which "lay a just foundation" for the Christian religion, were matters of fact, which could not be mistaken, and the knowledge of them is transmitted to us by testimony of the most unexceptionable description. They were not of a momentary nature, of which the proof is immediately withdrawn; but were permanent in their effects. They were also numerous, were complete at once, and were performed in broad daylight, in the midst of multitudes. Above all, they were wrought before enemies, under a government and priesthood alike rancorous in their hostility to them, and to the system they supported. Had, therefore, any deception been practised, it must have been detected. But, on the contrary, the enemies of Jesus Christ were compelled to admit their reality, the Jews ascribing them to diabolical, and the Heathens to magical influence. These miracles were never denied in the age in which they were performed, nor for ages afterwards. We have, then, the *unanimous* testimony of friends and of enemies for their truth; of persons on both sides whose interests were deeply implicated.

The miracles of Jesus Christ were worthy of him who wrought them, and of that cause which he came

to support. Predicted beforehand, they were directed to beneficent purposes, and never performed as mere displays of power. They are in strict correspondence with the nature of the end designed, and are essentially necessary to account for the effects they produced. They are related to us by eye-witnesses ; are inseparably connected with the rest of the history of which they are a part ; and are every way suitable to just notions of the wisdom and goodness of God.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CANON AND INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE canon and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures are subjects of the highest importance to every Christian. The Divine books contain the only information with respect to the salvation of sinners ; and the duties, privileges, and hopes of the heirs of heaven. All that can be known of the mind of God, and of the future state of man, must be learned from them. The theories of men with respect to the things of God, and all reasoning respecting revealed subjects, grounded on any other foundation but the Divine declarations, are not only fallacious as far as concerns their immediate objects, but prevent an accurate acquaintance with the ways of God, by opening innumerable devious paths, which deceitfully promise to lead to heavenly knowledge.

The Bible not only contains things that are Divinely accredited as true, but it contains all the truth on Divine subjects that is accessible to man. Hence every thing that respects the particular books composing the canon, and the inspiration of these books, is of the liveliest interest to every Christian. Whatever tends to invalidate the authority of any particular book of the canon, or to add other books to the number, ought to be met with the most decided opposition, as threatening to rob us of the most precious revealed truth, or to impose on us the traditions of men as the commandments of God. To reject a book, whose authenticity rests on the authority of the canon, is not only to give up the portion of Divine truth which such book contains, but to take away the evidence of every other book standing on the same authority. If one book of the canon is given up, how shall any other be retained on the authority of that canon? Is it a light matter to admit a principle that unsettles the evidence of every book of the Bible? Is it an innocent thing to charge as superfluous, unimportant, unholy, or unworthy of God, any thing that there is authority to hold as his Word? What, then, shall be said of those Christians, who have not only discovered an unbecoming facility in surrendering parts of the Book of God, but have laboured with the most strenuous exertions to unsettle the canon, and have availed themselves of every resource with which their ingenuity could supply them, to degrade some of the books that are as fully authenticated as any in that sacred collection?

In like manner, to recognise a book, not authenticated by the canon, is to invalidate the authority of the canon, and to lay a foundation for the admission of un-

accredited books to an indefinite extent. It is obvious, that those who do so cannot be assured of the truths which they receive, nor that they have all the revealed truths in the Bible. Such a mode of proceeding degrades the Word of God, unsettles the faith of the Christian, and greatly mars his edification and comfort.

The inspiration of the Scriptures is of equal importance with the authority of the canon. If God is not the **AUTHOR** of them, in the fullest and most complete sense of that term, we cannot receive them as the **WORD OF GOD**. The Scriptures so plainly assert their inspiration, that it is matter of astonishment that any who profess to believe them should have denied it. Yet many have contrived to hold the word, and to deny the thing itself. In this way, they perhaps hide even from themselves the boldness of their unhallowed speculations. That inspiration extends to words as well as to matter, is so obvious, that it never could have been questioned, if those who deny it had not misled themselves by their vain reasonings on the subject, or taken the contrary for granted without enquiry, on the authority of others. A writing inspired by God self-evidently implies, in the very expression, that the words are the words of God; and the common impression of mankind coincides with this most entirely. That the inspiration is in the matter, not in the words; that one part of Scripture is written with one kind or degree of inspiration, and another part with another kind or degree, is contrary to the phraseology, and totally without foundation in any part of the Scriptures themselves, and never could have suggested itself as a natural meaning of the word. This unholy invention is the figment of an ill-employed ingenuity, either to invalidate some Scrip-

ture truths, or to repel some objections which appeared otherwise unanswerable. It is an expedient to serve a purpose, and as little to be approved, when it is used to defend the declarations of God, as when it is used to overturn them. Yet degrading views both of the canon and inspiration of the Scriptures too generally prevail; and the writers of most influence on the public mind, instead of correcting these errors, have lent all their weight to their establishment.

The plenary or verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, is not only confirmed by the most express passages in the way of direct authority, but it is a matter of no light consideration, that there are no opposing passages on the other side. Hardly an error ever was maintained, but what could press some passage of the Word of God into its service, by the use of torture. Indeed, very many important truths of the Divine Word are not without their difficulties, from passages that afford a handle to human ignorance and human depravity. While these are always capable of a solution in perfect accordance with the truths to which, at first sight, they may appear to be opposed, they prove a test of our submission to the Divine wisdom. They manifest the child-like disposition of the people of God; but they are as gins and snares to the wisdom of this world, and the wise are taken by them in their own craftiness. As the contiguity of the Canaanites manifested the unbelief of the people of Israel, so these passages, in the Divine wisdom, bring out into open avowal the enmity of men to the truth of God. But the inspiration of the Scriptures, in the words as well as in the matter, is not opposed by any difficulty of this kind; and the authors of the low and derogatory view

of the Word of God, which ascribes to it different degrees of inspiration, cannot plead a single passage that will afford them even the shadow of support. Their doctrine is but a theory—a theory in opposition to the most express assertions of Scripture, and not countenanced by the allegation of a single text.

Whence comes the Bible? is a question in every way worthy of the deepest attention of the Christian. The grounds on which is rested the happiness of this world, and of the world to come, can never be too deeply examined. The title-deeds to so immense an inheritance are worthy of the constant researches of the life of man.

To establish with the utmost precision what are the books belonging to the canon of Scripture, to fix the brand of reprobation on all false pretenders to the honour of inspiration, and to vindicate the writings of the Old Testament and the New, as the words of the Spirit of God, can at no period be a useless labour. But present circumstances add greatly to this importance, and recent events have discovered not only ignorance on these subjects, where knowledge might have been expected, but opposition even from the friends of the gospel. It is much to be regretted, that unscriptural opinions concerning these subjects have long been entertained, and have of late been advocated by persons who might have been expected to be the most zealous in opposing their progress. The Christian public are in the greater danger from the infection of this heresy, that it is propagated by persons whom they have long been accustomed to regard as among the brightest ornaments of true religion. Had these dangerous opinions made their appearance in the works

of Socinians, Christians would have stood on their guard against them. But when the canon is unsettled, and verbal inspiration is denied by men who profess to hold the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, many will be misled. If, then, we are commanded to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, it is surely our duty to contend for the canon and inspiration of the Bible, by which only that faith can be ascertained. Our reverence for the Bible depends on our full conviction of the plenary inspiration of the Apostles and Prophets, and our being satisfied that our Bible exclusively contains their writings. On these subjects the mind of every Christian should be fully informed, and firmly established. Just views respecting them exalt our conceptions of the perfection of the Holy Scriptures, and tend to make us better acquainted with their contents. The opposite views have a contrary tendency in a very great degree.

While the natural opposition of fallen man to God leads some to open and avowed infidelity, it operates on a still greater number in the way of indifference to religion. It leads them to be satisfied with very lax and general views on a subject to which they are indisposed, but which they dare not altogether neglect. Under the influence of this indifference, many entertain no fixed views in regard to the Bible. They admit that the Scriptures contain a revelation from God, and that many parts of them are, therefore, entitled to our utmost reverence; but they do not perceive that all parts of the Bible, whether history, prophecy, praise, or precepts, are so many integral and connected parts of one great whole, intimately connected with the Cross of Christ, which forms the centre of revelation, with-

out reference to which no part can be understood. They may read the history of Israel, they may believe the facts recorded, and yet remain completely unacquainted with the instruction conveyed. They may admire the Proverbs of Solomon as the dictates of the wisest of men ; they may derive benefit from them in the regulation of their conduct in the world, while their souls cleave to the dust, and they are treasuring up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath. They may read the predictions of the desolation of Tyre and Babylon ; they may acknowledge the proof which these afford of the Divine foreknowledge, while they remain utterly ignorant of the nature of that kingdom to the establishment of which all such events were subservient, and with which every part of revelation is closely and inseparably connected. But when God opens the understanding to understand the Scriptures,—when men are made to know that all the prophets, both in the history of the past and the predictions of the future, bear witness to Christ, and that every circumstance recorded in the Word of God is a part of the testimony of Jesus, then they are led to exclaim, “ O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God !” to pray with the Psalmist, “ Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law ;” and with the Apostle, they follow on to apprehend Christ Jesus, the Lord, in the diligent study of every part of the Word of God.

This naturally produces just views on the subject of inspiration. Unless the mind be misled by false teaching, or perverted by some unscriptural theory, it puts an end to idle and impious speculations about supernatural influence being unnecessary, when the sacred

penmen are speaking of "common or civil affairs;" and about their mentioning "common occurrences or things in an incidental manner, as any other plain and faithful men might do." We behold the Word of God composed of many parts, but forming one grand connected system, like a building so admirably constructed, that every stone increases its beauty and stability, and not one of which could be removed without injury. We behold the wisdom of God in employing so many persons to labour in distant ages, and in different departments, producing in their various compositions a revelation of his will, complete in all its parts, and distinguished by the most perfect unity, without the shadow of discrepancy, redundancy, or deficiency. From not perceiving this, some attach different degrees of authority to different parts of Scripture. In the same way, many prefer the discourses of Jesus to the other portions of the New Testament, although, when about to leave the world, he informed his Apostles that there were many things which at present they could not bear, but which he would afterwards communicate to them by the teaching of his Spirit. According to his promise, he endued them with power from on high; and, consequently, in their writings we have the completion of Divine Revelation, the exhibition of the great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and which he more fully explained by speaking in his apostles. 2 Cor. xiii. 3.

CHAPTER V.

THE GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.*—
OLD TESTAMENT.

• THE Bible, which contains the account of the origin, progress, and nature of the Christian religion, is the production, not of one period, but of many ages. Its writers succeeded each other, during the space of about 1500 years. The Scriptures of the Old Testament far exceed, in antiquity, all other historical records. Moses, who wrote the first five books, lived more than 1000 years before Herodotus, the father of Grecian history; and rather earlier than the time of Herodotus, Ezra and Nehemiah completed the historical part of the Old Testament Scriptures.

The longevity of the first generations of men, which accelerated the population of the world from a single pair, rendered a written revelation, between the fall of man and the promulgation of the law at Sinai, less necessary, as the knowledge of the Divine will was, during that period, transmitted from one age to another, by very few individuals. From Adam to Moses, although a space of about 2500 years, it passed through only four intermediate persons. In all that time, God made himself known by visible interpositions and signs,

* A genuine book is one written by the person whose name it bears, as the author of it. An authentic book is one that relates matters of fact, as they really happened.

as in the cases of Cain and Babel, and held direct communication with prophets, who were revered as such by the people among whom they lived, which tended to preserve his truth from being corrupted. Thus it was sufficiently early in the days of Moses, permanently to record that authentic revelation, which was then delivered. But, at that period, when the age of man was reduced nearly to its present limits, God separated a people from the nations, and gave them such an establishment, that full security was afforded for preserving entire his written word.

Moses, who, at the giving of the law, acted the part of a mediator between God and the people of Israel, was called up to Mount Sinai, where he received those laws and institutions that were then enjoined. These, together with the history of the creation, and of whatever, from the beginning, was necessary for the instruction of the people of God, were committed by him to writing, in five books, and deposited in the tabernacle by the side of the ark.

These five books, called the Book of the Law, and also known by the name of the Pentateuch, (or five volumes,) constituted the first part of the sacred records, and include the history of about 2550 years. The law was read every Sabbath-day in the synagogues, and again solemnly every seventh year. The king was required to copy it, and the people were commanded to teach it to their children, and to bear it as "signs upon their hands, and frontlets between their eyes." The remaining books* of the Old Testament, com-

* The exact time when the book of Job was written is not known.

posed by different writers, carry the history of Israel beyond the Babylonish captivity, and contain the messages of a succession of prophets till 420 years before the coming of Christ, when, at the distance of about 1030 years from Moses, Malachi, the last of the prophets, wrote.

The books which compose the Old Testament Scriptures, were held by the Jews, in every age, to be the genuine works of those persons to whom they are ascribed ; and they have also been universally and exclusively, without any addition or exception, considered by them as written under the immediate influence of the Spirit of God. They preserved them with the greatest veneration ; and, at the same time, carefully guarded against receiving any apocryphal or uninspired books. While the Jews were divided into various sects, which stood in the most direct opposition to each other, there never was any difference among them respecting the authority of the sacred writings.

The five books of Moses were also preserved by the Samaritans, who received them nearly 700 years before the coming of Christ. Whatever disagreement, in other respects, subsisted between them and the Jews, and however violent their enmity against each other, they perfectly united in admitting the authenticity and inspiration of the law of Moses, which they both adopted as their religious rule. In addition to all this, about 280 years before the Christian era, the whole of the Old Testament was translated into Greek ; a language which, from the time of Alexander's conquests, was commonly understood by the nations of the world. *Thus Jews, Samaritans, and all the civilized world,*

had access to these sacred books, which prevented the possibility of their being either corrupted or altered without its being generally known.

We are assured by Josephus, the Jewish historian, who was born about five years after the death of Christ, and who lived in the time of the Apostles, that the Jews acknowledged no books as Divine, but twenty-two. "We have not," he says, "an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from, and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have), but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times ; which are justly believed to be Divine. And of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws, and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of 3000 years. But as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes King of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time: And how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation, is evident by what we do ; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one hath been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them ; but it is become natural to all Jews, immediately, and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain Divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and,

if occasion be, willingly to die for them.”—Josephus, ed. 1784, vol. ii. 361. The books here referred to are precisely the same, which from the beginning have been received by Christians, and that are still acknowledged by the modern Jews, concerning whose undivided attachment to them, all that is here asserted by Josephus is verified to the present day.

The authenticity of the Old Testament Scriptures, against which *there is no contradictory testimony*, is confirmed by many collateral evidences of customs, traditions, and natural appearances, which have been collected from every part of the world. It is likewise supported by all the notices to be found respecting them in the most ancient heathen historians. Josephus appeals to the public records of different nations, and to a great number of books extant in his time, but now lost, as indisputable evidence, in the opinion of the Heathen world, for the truth of the most remarkable events related in his History, the account of the early periods of which he professes to have taken principally from the Pentateuch. Porphyry, one of the most acute and learned of the early enemies of Christianity, admitted the genuineness of the Pentateuch, and acknowledged that Moses was prior to the Phœnician Sanchoniathon, who lived before the Trojan war. He even contended for the truth of Sanchoniathon’s account of the Jews, from its coincidence with the Mosaic history. Nor was the genuineness of the Pentateuch denied, by any of the numerous writers against the gospel, in the first four centuries, although the Christian fathers constantly appealed to the history and prophecies of the Old Testament in support of the Divine origin of the doctrines which they taught. The power

of historical truth compelled the Emperor Julian, whose favour to the Jews appears to have proceeded only from his hostility to the Christians, to acknowledge, that persons instructed by the Spirit of God once lived among the Israelites; and to confess that the books which bore the name of Moses were genuine; and that the facts which they contained were worthy of credit.

Of the genuineness and authenticity of their Scriptures, the Jews had the strongest evidence, which produced a corresponding impression. The five books of Moses are addressed to the Israelites as his contemporaries, and had they not been both genuine and authentic, they never could have been imposed on his countrymen, whose religion and government were founded upon them. The transactions of their own times were narrated by the several writers of the other books, and the truth of their respective histories was witnessed by all their countrymen who lived at the same period. The plainest directions were given for ascertaining the truth of the mission of all who declared themselves prophets, those who were sent being furnished with ample credentials, while every one who pretended to deliver the messages of God, without these credentials, was to be put to death. Deut. xviii. 20. And although false prophets did arise, and for a time obtained a degree of influence, their wickedness was exposed by the failure of their predictions, or by the judgments inflicted on them, as in the case of Hananiah. From the miracles, too, which the people of Israel constantly witnessed, as well as the fulfilment of the prophecies which was all along taking place, they had complete proof that the true prophets wrote by the

authority of God himself. During the whole period from Moses to Malachi, a succession of them was raised up, under whose direction the Word of God was infallibly distinguished from all counterfeits; and by their means, in connexion with the visible interference of the God of Israel in punishing those who made the people trust in a lie, the Scriptures were preserved pure and unadulterated.

These books are handed down to us by that nation, whose history they record with an impartiality for which we shall seek in vain in the annals of any other historians. There are here no national prejudices, and no attempts at embellishment. The history of the people of Israel is recorded by the uncompromising hand of truth. Their ingratitude, and their obstinacy, are alike exposed; their sinful incredulity on many occasions is published; their virtues are not magnified, and their courage is not extolled. This history contains an account, not in confused traditions, but in minute detail of time, place, and circumstances, of great public facts transacted in the presence of the whole people, in which they were actors, and of which permanent memorials were instituted at the time when they occurred.* These facts involved their submission to a

* Mr Leslie, who writes on Deism, in proving the authenticity of the books of Moses, lays down the following rules as a test of truth, which all meet in these books. Wherever they do meet, what they refer to, he affirms, cannot be false. On the contrary, they cannot possibly meet in any imposture whatever. "1. That the matter of fact be such, that men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may be judges of it. 2. That it be done publicly in the face of the world. 3. That not only public monuments

religion entirely different from that of all the surrounding nations, which laid them under great and painful restraints, and to laws and institutions, which, while they secluded them from the rest of mankind, exposed them to their utmost detestation and contempt. Had such facts never taken place, they could not at any period have been forced upon the belief of a whole nation, so as to be ever afterwards acknowledged by them, *without one dissenting voice*. It is a striking singularity in their laws, that they were promulgated not from time to time, but in one written code, and were permanently binding both on the rulers and the people, never to be in any respect either altered or added to.

Nor are the Jews alone referred to as witnesses of some of the most important of those transactions, the scene of which is not laid in an obscure corner, but in

be kept in memory of it, but some outward actions be performed.

4. That such monuments, and such actions, or observances, be instituted, and do commence from the time that the matter of fact was done. The two first rules make it impossible for any such matter of fact to be imposed on men at the time when said to be done, because every man's eyes and senses would contradict it. The two last rules render it impossible that the matter of fact should be invented and imposed some time after." After proving, in a variety of ways, that all his four rules meet in the books of Moses, Mr Leslie observes:—"You may challenge the whole world to show any action that is fabulous, which has all the four rules or marks before mentioned. *It is impossible*.—I do not say that every thing which wants these four marks is false, but that *nothing can be false which has them all*." It is said that Dr Middleton endeavoured for twenty years to find out some pretended fact to which Mr Leslie's four rules could be applied, but without success.

the midst of the most civilized nations of the world. The entrance of their ancestors into Egypt; their continuance for centuries, and increase there; the manner in which they were oppressed; the causes of their being suffered to depart, and the awful catastrophe which accompanied that departure,—are facts in which the people of Egypt were equally implicated with themselves. Their subsequent continuance, during forty years, in an uncultivated desert; their invasion of Palestine; the long-continued contest, and their final occupation of the land,—were public and permanent facts, brought home to the inhabitants of that country, who lived in the centre of the civilised world. The train of the history too, which, as well as the style and tendency of all the separate books, is entirely consistent with itself, proceeds in so uniform a manner, and one thing so naturally rises out of another, that unless on the supposition of what goes before, that which follows cannot be accounted for. This remark holds good with respect to the state of the Jews even to this day; and all that is recorded is necessary to explain their present unexampled situation. Impressed with an unalterable conviction of their Divine origin, they have, at the expense of every thing dear to men, tenaciously adhered, as far as circumstances permit, to the outward form of the religion, the laws and the institutions engrossed in their sacred records. And although they themselves are condemned by these books, and know that they are employed to support a system which they mortally hate, they have, under all circumstances, down to the present hour, continued to be faithful depositaries of the Old Testament Scriptures.

“The honour and privilege,” says Bishop Cosin, in

his history of the Canon of the Holy Scripture, “ which the posterity of Jacob some time had, above all the world besides, was to be that peculiar people of God, to whom he was pleased to make his laws and his Scriptures known; nor was there then any other church but theirs, or any other oracles of God, than what were committed to them. For they had all that were then extant, and all written in their own language.

“ These they divided into three several classes, whereof the first comprehended THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES; the second ALL THE PROPHETS; and the third *those* WRITINGS which they call the *Chethubim*, or BOOKS that were written by the holy men of God, who were not so properly to be ranked among the Prophets; from whom both the *five Books of Moses* and these *Chethubim* were distinguished; because, howsoever they were all written by the same prophetic spirit and instinct, which the *Books of the Prophets* were, yet *Moses* having been their special lawgiver, and the *writers of these other books* having had no public mission or office of *Prophets* (for some of them were *Kings*, and others were *great and potent persons* in their times), they gave either of them a *peculiar class* by themselves.

“ In this division, as they reckoned *Five Books* in the first class, so in the second they counted *Eight*, and in the third *Nine*; *Two-and-Twenty* in all; in number equal to the letters of their *Alphabet*, and as fully comprehending all that was then needful to be known and believed, as the number of their letters did all that was requisite to be said or written. And hereof after this manner they made their enumeration.

The Books of Moses	{	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy,	}	V.
Four Books of the former Prophets	{	Joshua, Judges and Ruth, Samuel, 1 and 2, Kings, 1 and 2,	}	4
Four books of the latter Prophets	{	Isaiah, Jeremiah and his Lamentations, Ezekiel, The Book of the 12 lesser Prophets,	}	4
And the rest of the Holy Writers	{	King David's Psalter, King Solomon's Proverbs, His Book of the Preacher, His Song of Songs, The Book of Job, The Book of Daniel, The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The Book of Chronicles, 1 and 2,	}	IX.

XXII.

“ Which last *Book of the Chronicles*, containing the sum of all their former histories, and reaching from the creation of the world to their return from *Babylon*, is a perfect *epitome of all the old Testament*, and therefore not unfitly so placed by them, as that it concluded and closed up their whole BIBLE.

“ Other *divisions* of these books were afterwards made, and the *order* of them was somewhat altered (as in divers respects they may well be), but the books were still the *same*; and as the *number* of them was never augmented, during the time of the Old Testa-

ment, so there were no *additional pieces* brought in, or set to any of them at all.

“It is generally received, that after the return of the Jews from their captivity in *Babylon*, all the BOOKS of the SCRIPTURE, having been revised by *Ezra* (then their priest and their leader), who digested them likewise into those several classes before rehearsed, were by him, and the Prophets of God that lived with him, consigned and delivered over to all posterity. But this is sure, that after his age, and the time of the prophet *Malachi* (who was *one* among those that prophesied in that time), there were no more *prophets* heard of among the Jews till the time of St John the Baptist, and therefore no more prophetical and divine SCRIPTURES between them.

“The BOOKS, then, of the OLD TESTAMENT, such and so many as they were after the captivity of *Babylon*, in the time of *Esdras*, (*Ezra*,) the same and so many being accurately preserved by the *Jews*, and continuing among them unto the time of our *blessed Saviour* (as they do likewise still unto this very day), without any addition, immunitation, or alteration, descended to the *Christians*.”

Nothing then can be better authenticated than the canon* of the Old Testament, as we now possess it. We have the fullest evidence that it was fixed 280 years before the Christian era, when, as has been noticed, the Greek translation, called the Septuagint, was executed at *Alexandria*, the books of which were the same as in our Bible. And as no authentic records of

* The word canon signifies a rule or a law. Hence the books of the Holy Scriptures taken together are called the canon, as designed by God to be the rule of our faith and practice.

a more ancient date are extant, it is impossible to ascend higher in search of testimony. As held by the Jews in the days of Jesus Christ, their canon was the same as when that translation was made, and it has since been retained by them without any variation, though by separating books formerly united, they increase their number. The integrity and divine original of these Scriptures are thus authenticated by a whole nation—the most ancient that exists—who have preserved them and borne their testimony to them from the time of Moses down to the present day. That nation was selected by God himself to be his witnesses, Isaiah, xliii. 10, to whom he committed “the lively oracles,” and amidst all their wickedness he prevented them from betraying their trust, the Jews never having given admission into their canon to any other books but to those which by his prophets and servants were delivered to them.

In addition to the unanimous testimony of the Jewish nation to the genuineness and authenticity of the Old Testament Scriptures, of which they had been constituted the depositaries, we have the decisive attestation of the Son of God. Jesus Christ, who appeared on earth 1500 years after Moses the first of the prophets, and 400 years after Malachi the last of them, bore his testimony to the sacred canon as held by the Jews in his time, and recorded it by his holy Apostles. Among all the evils with which he charged the Jews, he never once intimated that they had in any degree corrupted the canon either by addition, or diminution, or alteration. Since with so much zeal he purged the temple, and so often and sharply reprehended the Jews, for perverting the true sense of the Scriptures, much

more, we may be assured, would he have condemned them, if they had tampered with, or vitiated, these sacred writings ; but of this he never accused them. By often referring to the “ Scriptures,” which he declared “ cannot be broken,” the Lord Jesus Christ has given his full attestation to the whole of them as the unadulterated Word of God. “ *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.*” Here he warrants, in the most explicit manner, the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures. He told the Jews that they *made the Word of God of none effect through their traditions*. By calling them the WORD OF GOD, he indicated that these Scriptures proceeded from God himself. In his conversation with the disciples going to Emaus, when, “ *beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself;*” he gave the most express testimony to every one of the books of the Old Testament canon. Just before his ascension, he said to his Apostles, “ *These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.*” By thus adopting the common division of the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, which comprehended all the Hebrew Scriptures (to which division Josephus, as we have seen, refers), he ratified and sanctioned by his authority the canon of the Old Testament, as it was received by the Jews ; and by declaring that these books contained prophecies which must be fulfilled, he established their Divine inspiration, since God alone can enable men to foretell future events.

The same testimony is repeated by the Apostles, who constantly appeal to the Jewish Scriptures as "*the lively oracles of God*." Referring to the *whole* of the Old Testament, Paul declares, that "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.*" The term "Scripture," or "the Scriptures" (the writings), was then, as it is still, appropriated to the written Word of God, as both the Old Testament and the New are now, by way of eminence and distinction, called the *Bible*, or the *Book*. The same Apostle recognises the entire canon of the Jews, when he says, "*unto them were committed the oracles of God.*" The fidelity of the Jews to their trust is here asserted by Paul; and those to whom he writes are required to acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old Testament as of divine authority. While the Apostles affirmed that they spoke "*not the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth,*" they uniformly referred to the Old Testament Scriptures, as of equal authority with those of the New Testament, both of which, as commissioned by their Divine Master, they have delivered over to the Christian Church as "*the Word of God.*" Indeed, so manifestly is it the object of the Apostles to establish the divine authority of the Old Testament, that though they were as fully inspired and accredited as the ancient prophets, or former servants of God, and could establish the truth of any thing they taught by the miracles which they performed, yet they reasoned out of the Old Testament Scriptures, proving and alleging from them the truth of what they declared. Instead of professing to give authority to what was written in them, they uniformly appealed to those writings as authority equal to their own. Paul declares, that the Gospel of

God, to which he was separated as an Apostle, was that “*which he had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.*”—Rom. i. 2. * Here, where Paul asserts his Apostolic commission, he gives the whole weight of his Apostolic authority to the ancient Scriptures, which he denominates “*holy writings,*” in which God, he affirms, had recorded his promises by his prophets. When the same Apostle declares, that

* Much important matter is contained in this verse. The Apostle here tacitly repels the accusation of the Jews, that the gospel was a novel doctrine. He shows that the Old Testament is the promise of the New, and that the New is the fulfilment of the Old—by its prophecies which foretold a new covenant—by all that it promised concerning the Messiah—by all its legal institutions, which contained in themselves the promises which they prefigured—by the whole economy of the law which prepared men for the reception of the Gospel—by all the revelations of grace and mercy which contained the Gospel in substance, and, consequently, promised its more full development. He also repels the accusation, that the Apostles were enemies to Moses and the Prophets; showing, on the other hand, that there was a complete agreement betwixt them. He establishes the authority of the prophets and the inspiration of the Scriptures, by declaring that it was God himself who spoke in them. He shows whence we are to take the true Word of God and of his prophets, not from verbal tradition, which must be uncertain and fluctuating, but from the written Word, which is certain and permanent. He teaches that we ought constantly to have recourse to the Scriptures, for that all in religion which is not found in them, is really novel, although it may have been received for many ages; but that what is found there is really ancient, although men may have for a long time lost sight of it. Such are the great truths contained in this compendious verse.—*See the author's Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, ch. i. 2.*

“ *whatsoever things were written afore time were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope,*” he gives his attestation to the whole of the sacred writings, and proves that they exist entire; for he could not have said this if any of them had been lost, or had any additions been made to them.*

From the important connexion that subsists between the Old Testament and the New, the early Christian writers carefully examined the Jewish Scriptures, and have given distinct catalogues of these books, precisely the same as we now receive, and as they are still retained by the Jews. Melito, Bishop of Sardis, travelled in the second century into Palestine, on purpose to investigate the subject. His catalogue, which is preserved

* It is true, that the sacred writers refer to other books that do not now exist, as of Iddo the seer; but they do not refer to them as canonical books, but as civil records of the kingdom, such as the reference to the civil records of Persia in the book of Esther. Were it even to be admitted that some epistles written by the Apostles have not come down to us, the fact would not imply that the Scriptures have lost an epistle, or a single word. There might have been hundreds of such inspired letters from the Apostles, without implying that ever they made a part of that collection that was designed by God to be a perfect and sufficient standard to all ages. This is said not from a conviction that there ever existed any inspired letters of the Apostles except those which we possess,† but they may have existed in any number without affecting the integrity of the canon, which some have weakly supposed would follow from the fact, if admitted.

† “Some,” says Theodoret, “imagine Paul to have wrote an epistle to the Laodiceans, and accordingly produce a certain forged epistle (so entitled); but the holy Apostle does not say *τὴν πρὸς Λαοδικείας*, the epistle to the Laodiceans, but *τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας*, the epistle from the Laodiceans.”

by Eusebius, contains the canonical books of the Old Testament, and no more. He names the several books, comprehending under the Book of Ezra, those of Nehemiah and Esther, to which they were commonly annexed, these three being by many accounted but one book. In the Jewish list, the Book of Nehemiah, only, was joined to Esther, as the Book of Lamentations was also annexed to Jeremiah ; but the Book of Esther was never wanting in the canon of the Jews. The learned Origen, in the third century, gives a catalogue of the Jewish Scriptures, and says, “ that the canonical books of Scripture contained in the Old Testament, are twenty and two in number, which the Hebrews have left unto us, according to the number of letters which they have in their alphabet.” Athanasius also, in the fourth century, specifies the twenty-two books, and, naming them one after another, in the same order in which they now stand, says, that “ they are received by the whole church.” Hilary of Poitiers, and many writers in the same century, affirm that these books alone were received as canonical. This fact is confirmed by the Council of Laodicea, which met in the year 363, and gave a list of the twenty-two books, the same as have been received both by Jews and Christians.

Nothing can be more satisfactory and conclusive than all the parts of the foregoing evidence of the authenticity and integrity of the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures. The Jews, to whom they were first committed, never varied respecting them ; while they have been fully recognised by the Lord and his Apostles, and consequently, their authenticity is established by express revelation. And that we now pos-

sess them as thus delivered and authenticated, we have the concurrent testimony of the whole succession of the most distinguished early Christian writers, as well as of the Jews to this day, who, in every age, and in all countries, the most remote from one another, have constantly been in use of reading them in their synagogues.

The Scriptures of the Old Testament that have been thus so faithfully preserved, and so fully attested, contain the most satisfactory and convincing internal evidences of their truth. The character of God which they exhibit, nowhere delineated in the writings of any of the wisest of this world, unenlightened by revelation, is such as carries with it its own confirmation. The character they give of man is verified in the history of every nation, and of each individual. The majesty, purity, and suitableness to the condition of man, of the doctrine they contain—the soundness and unrivalled excellence of the moral precepts they inculcate, and the glory of the succeeding dispensation which, towards their close, they indicate with increasing clearness; and all this confirmed and verified in the minutest particulars by the New Testament Scriptures—form a body of internal evidence, to which nothing but the deep corruption of the human heart, and the enmity of the carnal mind against God, could render any one insensible.

In the course of time, and in the progress of that corruption in the churches which soon began to work, the sacred canon was defiled by the addition and even intermixture of other books, which, through the unfaithfulness of Christians, were admitted first as of secondary,

and at length by many as of equal authority and consideration with those of which it was composed.

These books were called Apocryphal, and are supposed to have been so denominated from the Greek word *αποκρυπτω*, *to hide—to conceal*, which is expressive of the uncertainty and concealed nature of their origin. Who their authors were is not known. They were written subsequently to the cessation of the prophetic spirit in the time of Malachi, who closed his testimony by reminding the people of Israel of the authority of the law of Moses, and intimating that after himself, no prophet was to arise until the harbinger of the Messiah should appear. They were not written in the Hebrew language, in which all the books of the Old Testament were originally composed, with the exception of a few passages in Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, and Esther, which were written in Chaldee. Both Philo and Josephus, who flourished in the first century of the Christian era, are altogether silent concerning these spurious books, which were not contained in the Septuagint version, as set forth by the translators under Ptolemy : * and they form no part of those sacred

* “ Of the *Greek Septuagint Bible* (as it was first set forth in the time of Ptolemæus Philadelphus), *St Augustin* acknowledged no more *Books*, than what were then translated out of the *Hebrew copies* sent from *Jerusalem*, where neither *Tobit* nor *Judith*, nor any of that *class*, were to be found ; for (whatever *Genebrard* saith of his own head to the contrary) those *additional writings* were brought in afterwards, and used only by the *Hellenist Jews* abroad at *Babylon* and *Alexandria*, from whom they were, in time following, commended to be read by the *Christians*, but never made *equal* with the *other sacred Scriptures*, as they are now set forth in the *Roman Septuagint*

writings committed by God to the Jews, universally acknowledged and preserved by them entire. Above all, they have not received, like these holy writings, the attestation of Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, placing upon them the broad seal of heaven, who have never once quoted them. A real and essential difference was constantly maintained by the early Christians between them and the canonical books; and it was not till the fourth century, when the churches had become exceedingly corrupt both in faith and practice, that they came to be permitted to appear with the canon.

The Apocryphal books, though not admitted by the first Christian writers, or churches, to have any authority in matters of faith, yet claim for themselves that authority, and even arrogate an equality with the sacred Scriptures, to which they were at length advanced by the church of Rome. They present themselves to the world as a part of the Word of God, sometimes communicated immediately by himself, sometimes conveyed through the medium of angels, who are represented as standing before him. The claim to inspiration is not more explicitly asserted by the writers of the Scriptures, than by some of the authors of the Apocryphal books. No higher demand for attention to their messages can be made by holy prophets and apostles, than when they affirm, "Thus saith the Lord." Yet this is the language in which men are addressed by these authors. They "*have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, SAYING, THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD, when the Lord hath not spoken.*" Ezek. xxii, 28.

by the authority of *Sixtus Quintus*, which is an edition of *that Bible*, many ways depraved.—*COSIN*, p. 98.

In the second book of Esdras, the writer having commenced by declaring his lineage, affirms, “*The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Go thy way and show my people,*” &c. “*Speak thou therefore unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord.*”—“*Thus saith the Almighty Lord.*” This expression occurs four times in the first chapter. The second chapter opens with “*Thus saith the Lord,*” which in the course of that chapter is repeated nine times; and an angel is represented as speaking to the writer—“*Then the angel said unto me, go thy way, and tell my people what manner of things, and how great wonders of the Lord thy God thou hast seen.*” The rest of the book proceeds in the same strain, the author continuing to recite divine communications, made to himself as they had been to Moses.

In the book of Baruch, ii. 21, it is written, “*Thus saith the Lord.*”

In the book of Tobit a long interview with an angel is related, who affirms that he is one of the holy angels who go in and out before the glory of the Holy One. “*Now, therefore,*” says this angel, “*give God thanks, for I go up to him that sent me, but write all things which are done in a book.*” Tobit, xii. 15, 20. God himself is often introduced by the Apocryphal writers, as communicating his will to them, and long speeches are ascribed to him.* Thus, the writers of the Apocrypha come as the bearers of messages from God, and as such they deliver them to mankind. They profess to communicate a portion of spiritual light, not bor-

* The unintelligible speeches, replete with absurdities, ascribed to God in different places, prove the Apocrypha to be not only a human but a most *impious* composition.

rowed from the Holy Scriptures, but immediately derived from the source of light. In every sense of the word, these books present themselves as a part of Divine Revelation, and if they were what they pretend to be, would be entitled to equal attention and reverence with the Holy Scriptures. Here, then, there is no medium, and the conclusion is inevitable :—*The Apocrypha is either an addition made to the Old Testament Scriptures by God himself, or it is the work of lying prophets.* This important question ought, therefore, to be considered by every Christian, and happily its solution is attended with no difficulty.

The Hebrew Scriptures come to us, as we have seen, with the fullest and most unequivocal attestations, that they are the oracles of God. On the other hand, if we examine the claim of the Apocryphal books, what do we observe? External evidence of their constituting a portion of Divine Revelation they have none. The question, then, is, on this ground alone, even were there no other to which we could appeal, for ever decided against them. But in order to produce the fullest conviction in the minds of all who know the truth as it is in Jesus, and to exclude every doubt, let us call another witness. We shall appeal, then, to the internal evidence of these writings. They contain within themselves their own condemnation. They are inconsistent, absurd, and contrary to the Word of God.

Viewing the Apocryphal writings as standing by the side of the Holy Scriptures, what character do they present? Do they offer any thing new, any thing that it might be of importance to know beyond what is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament? Do they teach us the way of God more per-

fectly? This will not be pretended by any one. Do their histories, which they present to us as true, comport with the dignity of Holy Writ? Do they possess internal marks of being authentic? Do they bear the character of a revelation from God, given for our instruction? So far is this from being the case, that many of their narrations are incredible and self-contradictory, and others irreconcilably at variance with the canonical Scriptures. They are defiled with a variety of errors, vanities, low conceits, and other faults incident to human nature and human infirmity. While their style, far different from the grave and chaste simplicity, or the divine and spiritual majesty, of the pure genuine Word of God, is deformed with levity, and affectation of worldly wisdom and eloquence.

The Apocryphal books are not only replete with absurdities, superstitions, and falsehoods, in their narrations, but also with false doctrines, directly opposed to the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, such as those of purgatory and prayers for the dead. But waving for the present every other charge against them on this head, let us turn our attention to a single point of the last importance, which involves an answer to that most momentous of all questions, *How shall man be just before God?* The Scriptures assure us, that if any man denies the doctrine of justification by faith without works, he becomes a debtor to do the whole law. What judgment then are we bound to form of a book which, openly contradicting this fundamental doctrine, and exhibiting another way of acceptance with God, makes void the whole plan of redemption? On this one point, then, of the explicit contravention by the Apocryphal books of the grand Scripture doctrine of justification,

let them be tried ;—that doctrine which is peculiar to the Christian religion, and unknown to every false one, which so remarkably illustrates and honours the finished work of the Redeemer—that doctrine of which God in his word has affirmed, that the man who perverts it, Christ shall profit him nothing.

It is written in the Apocrypha, “ *Whoso honoureth his father maketh an atonement for his sins ;*” and again, “ *Water will quench a flaming fire, and alms maketh an atonement for sins.*” Eccl. iii. 3-30. Sentiments more directly opposed to the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, more dishonourable to God, more contrary to his holiness, more derogatory to his justice, or more fraught with mortal poison, and more destructive to the souls of men, cannot be imagined.

The apostle Paul solemnly declared to the churches of Galatia, that if an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel than that which he had preached unto them, he should be accursed. That very occurrence which the apostle here supposes, has, according to the Apocrypha, been realized. An angel from heaven, it affirms, has descended and declared that he came from God. “ *I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One ; not of any favour of mine, but by the will of our God I came.*” Tobit, xii. 15, 18. And that very doctrine does this angel explicitly contradict which the apostle so earnestly inculcated, accompanied with the solemn asseveration, that the curse of God should rest on any creature who dared to pervert it. “ *It is better,*” says this angel, “ *to give alms than to lay up gold : for alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away*

all sin." Tobit, xii. 8. 9. If the man or angel who shall preach another gospel than that which the Bible contains, is pronounced by the Holy Ghost to be accursed, then must this awful denunciation apply to a book which, pretending to record the message of an angel from heaven, teaches another gospel. On the Apocrypha, therefore, does this anathema rest.

The writers, then, of the Apocryphal books, "who tread down the pastures, and foul the residue of the waters with their feet," Ezek. xxiv. 18, are, by confronting their doctrine with that of the holy Apostles, proved to be false prophets, against whom the wrath of God and many woes are denounced in Scripture. In opposition to their folly and wickedness, the Lord says, "*The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream : and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat ? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire ? saith the Lord ; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces ?*" Jer. xxii. 28.—"*The prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.*" Deut. xviii. 20. These, and many other passages, are pointedly applicable to the Apocrypha. The writers of it may be justly termed prophets of deceit, and of their own heart, that prophecy lies in the name of the Lord, "*saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.*" Jer. xxiii. 25. They have indeed imitated the style of the Scriptures, like the impostors concerning whom it is written, "*Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neigh-*

hour. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." Jer. xxiii. 30. "Thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!—Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The Lord saith it; albeit I have not spoken? Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord God. And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies." Ezek. xiii. 3, 7, 9. The Bible, then, and the Apocrypha, stand in direct opposition in their doctrine, and the latter is denounced by the former, and lies under its heaviest anathemas. The Apocryphal books, when delivered to the people as part of the divine oracles, are calculated by their absurdities to make men Deists or Atheists rather than Christians, and by their false doctrines to cause their readers to wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. As their introduction into the sacred canon has been the grand and crowning device of Satan for deceiving and corrupting Christians, and supporting the claims of the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, it will be proper to trace it from its origin.

Although all the Apocryphal books had been called, by the first Christian writers, spurious and supposi-

titious, as not being inspired, but, on the contrary, containing doctrines which subvert the very foundations of the Gospel, and of a sinner's acceptance before God ; yet some of them were at length selected as being supposed to be purer than the rest, and better entitled to be used in public readings and services, and on this account they received the name of Ecclesiastical or Church books. Of these there was even formed a register or inferior canon, to exclude such as were reckoned more erroneous or faulty ; and this, in process of time, occasioned the name of canonical to be given in common to the writings which were truly Divine, and to those which were reckoned the best of the Apocryphal books. The books of the first canon were esteemed to be divinely inspired, and to be the certain rule of faith. The Apocryphal books were reckoned to be instructive and useful, but were excluded from all authority in matters of faith, and in determination of controversies ; and when they came to be permitted to be read in the churches, the reader stood up in an inferior place.* It happened, however, in the course of years, that all these Canonical and Apocryphal books were conjoined and bound up together in one volume, for the greater facility of ecclesiastical use ; and for the purpose of uniting the historical parts with the historical, the proverbial with the proverbial, the doctrinal

*Augustine, who lived in the fifth century, relates, that when the Book of Wisdom, and other writings of the same class, were publicly read in the church, they were given to the readers or inferior ecclesiastical officers, who read them in a place lower than that in which those universally acknowledged to be the canonical, were read by the bishops and presbyters in a more eminent and conspicuous manner.

with the doctrinal, they were *intermingled* with one another, as at present in the Roman Catholic Bibles. But this practice obtained no sanction from the primitive churches, or the best and earliest of the Christian fathers, who, on the contrary, strongly objected against it; and denied that these books were possessed of any authority. At the beginning they were not acknowledged at all, nor admitted into any of the earlier catalogues of the Scriptures, and their introduction to that place which they afterwards unlawfully usurped, was slow and partial.

Justin, who suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith, in the year 163, never, in any of his writings, cites a single passage of the Apocryphal books, nor makes the least mention of them in his conference with Trypho: while he speaks of it as a special work of Divine Providence, that the Jews had been faithful preservers of the Scriptures. None of these books appear in the catalogue of the Old Testament Scriptures of Melito, Bishop of Sardis, in the second century; nor in that of Origen, in the third century.

In the fourth century, Eusebius, who was Bishop of Cæsarea in the year 320, affirms, that from the time of Jesus Christ, there were no sacred books of Holy Scripture, besides those which had been received into the canon of the Jewish and Christian churches. He had read the Apocryphal books, and makes frequent quotations from them as the writings of particular authors, but never acknowledges any of them as a part of the canonical Scriptures. He declares that the authors of those books which bear the names of the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, are wri-

ters contradicted, or not allowed, in the canon. When Porphyry adduced some objections against him from the new pieces annexed to the book of Daniel, he said that he was not bound to defend them, because they had no authority of Holy Scripture.

In the year 325, the first general council was held at Nice, at which were present 318 bishops, besides multitudes of other Christians, from all the provinces and churches of the Roman Empire. That in the Scriptures they made use of, "there were none of the controverted books, appears," says Bishop Cosin, p. 42, "by the evidence and attestation which both the Emperor Eusebius and Athanasius (the chiefest actors in this council), have hereunto given us."

Athanasius, who flourished in the year 340, enumerates the books of the Old and New Testament precisely as we now have them, and asserts that these alone are to be accounted the canonical and authentic sacred writings admitted by the Lord and his Apostles, and recognised by all the fathers and teachers of the church since the Apostolic age. At the same time he reproveth those who had intermixed a number of the Apocryphal books with the catalogue of the acknowledged books of the Old Testament.

"These things," says Cyril, who was Bishop of Jerusalem in the year 350, "we were taught by the divinely-inspired Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. For there is one God of both Testaments, who in the Old Testament foretold the Christ, who was manifested in the New.—Read the Divine Scriptures, the two-and-twenty books of the Old Testament, which were translated by the seventy-two interpreters—Read these

two-and-twenty books, and have nothing to do with Apocryphal writings. These, and these only, do you carefully meditate upon which we securely or openly read in the church. The apostles and ancient bishops, governors of the church, who have delivered them to us, were wiser and holier men than thou. As a son of the church, therefore, transgress not these bounds; meditate upon the books of the Old Testament, which, as has been already said, are two-and-twenty; and if you are desirous to learn, fix them in your memory, as I enumerate them, one by one." The list of these books Cyril subjoins; it is precisely the same as the Jewish canon which we receive.*

The council of Laodicea, which met in the year 363, prohibited the public reading of any books as sacred or inspired except the canonical. In their 59th canon, it is declared, "that private psalms ought not to be read (or said) in the church, nor any books not canonical, but only the canonical books of the Old and New Testament."

"The Hebrews," says Jerom, who was ordained

*"—although both *he* (Cyril) at *Jerusalem*, and *Athanasius* at *Alexandria*, together with *other Churches*, had not the use of the *Hebrew Bible* among them, but kept themselves only to the *Greek translation* of the LXX., whereunto were afterwards commonly added those *ecclesiastical books* which the *Hellenist Jews* first introduced and received into their churches, that so all the most eminent books of religion written in the Greek tongue before *Christ's* time might be put together and contained in *one volume*; yet nevertheless they were always careful to preserve the honour of the *Hebrew canon*, which consisted of XXII. *books* only, *divinely inspired*; and accurately to distinguish them from the *rest*, which had but *ecclesiastical authority*."—COSIN, p. 54.

presbyter of Antioch about the year 378, "have two-and-twenty letters, and they have as many books of divine doctrine for the instruction of mankind." He next gives a list of these books, and then adds, "This prologue I write as a preface to all the books to be translated by me from the Hebrew into Latin, that we may know that all the books that are not of this number, are to be reckoned Apocryphal. Therefore Wisdom, which is commonly called Solomon's, and the book of Jesus the son of Sirach, and Judith, and Tobit, and the Shepherd are not in the canon." In his Latin translation, called the Vulgate, Jerom intermingled the Apocryphal and inspired writings; but to prevent mistake, he prefixed to each book a short notice, in which the reader was distinctly informed of its character, and apprised that the Apocryphal writings were not in the canon of Scripture. He says that to meet the prejudices of the ignorant he retained these "fables," which, though not in the Hebrew, were widely dispersed; but he adds, that according to his custom, he had marked these Apocryphal intruders with a spit or dagger, placed horizontally for the purpose of stabbing them.* In his letter to Læta, written about the year 398, giving her instructions concerning her daughter Paula, he advises

* After the third verse of the tenth chapter of Esther, where the Apocryphal addition to that book commences, Jerom has inserted the following notice; it is the ancient Vulgate to which he refers, which was the most common version of his time:—
 "Quæ habentur in Hebræo, plena fide expressi. Hæc autem, quæ sequuntur, scripta reperi in editione vulgata, quæ Græcorum lingua et literis continentur: et interim post finem libri hoc capitulum ferebatur: quod juxta consuetudinem nostram obelo, id est veru, prænotavimus."

that she should read the Scriptures, and in this order : first the Psalms, next the Proverbs, the Acts, and the Epistles of the Apostles. Afterwards she may read the Prophets, the Pentateuch, the Kings and Chronicles, but *no* Apocryphal books ; or, if she does, she should first, by way of caution, be informed of their true character. Jerom speaks of the fables of Bel and the Dragon, and says that the Apocryphal books do not belong to those whose names they bear, and that they contain several forgeries. In all his works, he explicitly maintains the distinction between canonical and Apocryphal books. Of the latter he says that the church does not receive them among canonical Scriptures ; and that they are not to be esteemed of authority for proving any doctrine of religion. His canon of the Old Testament was precisely that of the Jews ; and though he and other ancient Christian writers sometimes quote the Apocryphal books, by way of illustration, as they also do Heathen writings, yet they had a supreme regard for the Jewish canon, consisting of those books which were received by the Jewish people as sacred and divine.

Epiphanius, Bishop of Constantia, in the island of Cyprus, who wrote in the year 392, has thrice enumerated the books of the Old Testament as held by the Jews. Of the Apocryphal books he makes no mention, except of the Wisdom of Solomon and the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, of which, after referring to the canonical books, he says, that they are not brought into the same number with the foregoing, and, therefore, are not placed in the ark of the covenant.

Rufinus, presbyter of Aquileia, who wrote about the year 397, after giving distinct catalogues of the sacred

Scriptures, both of the Old Testament and the New, adds as follows: "However, it ought to be observed, that there are also other books that are not canonical, but have been called by our forefathers ecclesiastical, as the Wisdom of Solomon, and another which is called the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach; and among the Latins, is called by the general name of Ecclesiasticus; by which title is denoted, not the author of the books, but the quality of the writing. In the same rank is the book of Tobit, and Judith, and the books of the Maccabees. In the New Testament is the book of the Shepherd, or of Hermas, which is called the Two Ways, or the Judgment of Peter. All which they would have to be read in the churches, but not to be alleged by way of authority for proving articles of faith. Other Scriptures they called Apocryphal, which they would not have to be read in the churches." Thus, it appears, that all the early Christian writers, while they were unanimous in acknowledging the Jewish Scriptures, rejected, with one accord, the Apocryphal books, as uncanonical, or destitute of all claim to inspiration.

The first catalogue of the books of the Old Testament, in which Apocryphal books were added to the Jewish canon, although some refer it to a later date, is that of the third, sometimes called the sixth council of Carthage, which assembled in the year 397, when the books of the Maccabees were reckoned in the number of canonical books. But the word canonical appears to have been used by them loosely, as comprehending not only the Jewish Scriptures, which were admitted as the rule of faith, but those Apocryphal books also, which they esteemed to be useful. It is said, too, that Innocent, Bishop of Rome, in the year 402, confirmed

this catalogue ; but this is doubtful. Other fathers and councils, in the succeeding centuries, speak occasionally of these books as canonical, meaning, however, as appears, in the secondary sense, and generally with express declarations of their inferiority to the Jewish canon, when that question was agitated. But at length the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, in order to check the progress of the Reformation, pronounced the Apocryphal books (except the prayer of Manasseh, and the third and fourth books of Esdras) to be strictly canonical. From that period they have usurped the name of inspired Scriptures, and have been intermingled with the canonical books in the Bibles of Roman Catholics. Thus, in direct opposition to the command of God, an addition was made to the sacred canon, in the very worst form, of many entire books, and these not corresponding with the inspired writings, but in numerous instances, and most important particulars, directly contradicting them.*

* The following list of books, which is annexed to the decree of the Council of Trent, will show how completely the Apocryphal books, here in Italics, are intermingled in Roman Catholic Bibles. The books of the New Testament are the same as in the Protestant canon.

5 of Moses, <i>i.e.</i>	Chronicles, 2	Ecclesiastes
Genesis	Ezra, 1 and 2	Song of Songs
Exodus	Nehemiah	<i>Wisdom</i>
Leviticus	<i>Tobias</i>	<i>Ecclesiasticus</i>
Numbers	<i>Judith</i>	Isaiah
Deuteronomy	Esther	Jeremiah
Joshua	<i>Rest of Esther</i>	<i>Baruch</i>
Judges	Job	Ezekiel
Ruth	David's Psalms, 150	Daniel
Kings, 4	Proverbs	<i>Song of Three Children</i>

We have thus observed the manner in which the Apocryphal books came to be connected with the canonical Scriptures. They were not admitted into the canon without much opposition. The most distinguished Christian writers often protested against them, and although those who patronised them maintained that they never meant to dignify these writings with any authority as rules of faith, yet a presentiment, or foresight, of the abuse that might be made of them, induced many in the churches, and even whole churches, to resist their introduction. The Christian assemblies of the East were their principal opponents, and more strictly observed the directions of the Apostle John, who had passed a great part of his life among them. This appears evidently from the conduct and decisions of the Council of Laodicea above quoted, which was held in the fourth century, and which prohibited the reading of any but the canonical books in the churches.

The introduction of the Apocryphal books probably originated in their being written, as is supposed, by Jews, who constantly refer to the authenticated history of their nation, and to the law delivered to their fathers. Although totally devoid of both external and internal evidence of their being from God, yet they came, as we have seen, to be considered as related to the Scriptures,

<i>Susannah</i>	Amos	Zephaniah
<i>Bel and the Dragon</i>	Obadiah	Haggai
12 Prophets, the less,	Jonah	Zechariah
<i>i.e.</i>	Micah	Malachi
Hosea	Nahum	<i>Maccabees, 2, I. & II.</i>
Joel	Habakkuk	

Four books are incorporated in the body of the inspired texts of Esther and Daniel.

not, indeed, as possessing divine authority, but as profitable for instruction ; and in this light they continued to be viewed till the Reformation, which was produced by an open appeal to the Word of God. In vain did the Man of Sin, at that era, protest against tampering with the long-established authority of the church—in vain did he endeavour to prevent the translation and circulation of the Scriptures: the palpable abuses in the Popish system convinced multitudes that it could not be of God, and the desire of examining the Scriptures became irresistible. Amidst all this enquiry, however, the ignorance of Europe was so great, that the Council of Trent, above referred to, ventured to decree that the Apocryphal books were equal in point of authority, and were henceforth to be viewed as an integral part of the Word of God, and to pronounce its anathema on all who should reject them.

It was then that the design of Satan, in bringing about the unhallowed connexion between the Holy Scriptures and the Apocryphal writings, was brought to light. He had patiently waited his opportunity, and, satisfied with having the books of lying prophets placed in juxtaposition with the Word of God, had not prosecuted the advantage which he had obtained ; but he well knew, that, in the course of events, this undefined association of truth and error—of sacred and profane—would increase to more ungodliness ; and when the throne of Antichrist seemed tottering to its foundation, he successfully propped it up by the adulteration of the Word of God, for which the unfaithfulness of Christians for a thousand years had paved the way. While the reformers strenuously denied the authority of the

Apocrypha, and loudly protested against the blasphemous decree by which it was sanctioned as divine, they yielded to the suggestions of a sinful expediency, and allowed it to retain that affinity to the Scriptures which it had long possessed, by being translated, bound up, and circulated along with them. And who can tell how far this has tended to produce that denial of the full inspiration of the Scriptures, which is so lamentably common among Protestants? Be this as it may, to the present hour the book of God is very generally profaned by this unhallowed connexion, more or less defined or acknowledged. But God now appears to have arisen to plead the cause of his own Word. The question in regard to the Apocrypha has, in the course of his adorable providence, begun to be agitated, and it will issue in the purification of the fountain from which those waters flow, that are destined to diffuse life and felicity over the world. Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9. The means by which the attention of Christians has been directed to this all-important subject are very remarkable, and we are forcibly reminded, that, in the good providence of God, the most important effects frequently proceed from causes which at first appear to have a directly opposite tendency, and that the friends of truth have often reason to rejoice in the issue of events which at first occasioned the greatest alarm. We are thus taught to adore him who makes the wrath of man to praise him, and causes human folly and wickedness to redound to the praise of his own glory.

That the usurpation of the place which the Apocryphal writings have long occupied should be traced to its origin, and their presumptuous claims to inspi-

ration, or to any authority, exploded, was the more necessary, as many are but little acquainted with the manner in which these forgeries have obtained the situation they hold in the Bibles of Roman Catholics, and even of Protestants, or with the impiety of their contents. The Apocrypha, instead of being a part of God's word, and a book of useful though uninspired instruction, is a book of imposture and destructive error.

On the subject of adding the Apocryphal writings to the Holy Scriptures, Bishop Hall expresses himself in the following terms:—"The Scripture complains justly of three main wrongs offered to it. The first, of addition to the canon. Who can endure a piece of new cloth to be patched unto an old garment? or, what can follow hence, but that the rent should be worse? Who can abide, that, against the faithful information of the Hebrews; against the clear testimonies of Melito, Cyril, Athanasius, Origen, Hilary, Jerom, Rufinus, Nazianzen; against their own doctors, both of the middle and latest age; six whole books should, by their fatherhoods of Trent, be, under pain of a curse, imperiously obtruded upon God and his church? Whereof, yet, some purpose to their readers no better than magical jugglings; others, bloody self-murders; others, lying fables; and others, Heathenish rites; not without a public applause in the relation *We know full well how great impiety it is, to fasten upon the God of Heaven the weak conceptions of a human wit*: neither can we be any whit moved with the idle crack of the Tridentine curse, while we hear God thundering in our ears, 'If any man add unto these words, God shall add unto him the plagues writ-

ten in this book ;' (Apocal. xxii. 18.) Neither know I, whether it be more *wickedly audacious to fasten on God those things which he never wrote* ; or to weaken the authority, and deny the sufficiency, of what he hath written."

While there are those who have dared to add certain Apocryphal books to the Jewish canon, which form no part of it, but are the production of lying prophets, and therefore under the curse pronounced upon such by God, there are others who have contended that certain books included in that canon do not constitute a part of Divine revelation. This has been particularly the case respecting the book of Esther and the Song of Solomon, which, it has been alleged, are not quoted in the New Testament. But though this may be true as to particular passages, yet the books themselves are quoted each time that either the Lord Jesus Christ or his Apostles refer to what is "written," or to "the Scriptures," of which they form a part. Exceptions have been made to these books from their contents, and on this ground their claim to be canonical has been doubted. Such a sentiment is the effect of inconsiderate rashness and presumption. The arrogant wisdom of man may now pretend to quarrel with the Book of Esther for not containing the name of God, and to find impurity in the Song of Solomon, or imperfection in other books of Holy Writ. But the authority of Jesus Christ has given a sanction to every book in the Jewish canon, and blasphemy is written on the forehead of that theory which alleges imperfection, error, or sin, in any book in that sacred collection. It is not necessary to urge, that the genuineness and authenticity of the two books referred to were

not only not doubted, but that they were received by the Jews with peculiar veneration, which is a well-known fact. The irrefragable proof respecting their authenticity and inspiration is, that *they form a part of those Scriptures which were committed to the Jewish Church, and were sanctioned by the Lord and his Apostles.* On these incontrovertible grounds, all the books of the Old Testament Scriptures are most surely believed by the great body of Christians to be the oracles of God; and could it be shown that any one of them is not worthy of being received as a part of the sacred canon, this would invalidate the claim of all the rest. That man, therefore, who rejects a single one of these books as not being canonical, in other words, equally the dictates of inspiration as the rest, proves that he does not rely on the true and secure foundation which God has laid for entire confidence in that portion of the faithful record of his Word. He does it in defiance of all the foregoing evidence; and to deny the whole volume of inspiration would not require the adoption of any other principle than that on which he is proceeding.

NEW TESTAMENT.

FROM the time when the Old Testament was completed by Malachi, the last of the prophets, till the publication of the New Testament, about 460 years elapsed. During the life of Jesus Christ, and for some time after his ascension, nothing on the subject of his mission was committed to writing. The period of his remaining upon earth, may be regarded as an interme-

mediate state between the Old and New Dispensations. His personal ministry was confined to the land of Judea ; and, by means of his miracles and discourses, together with those of his disciples, the attention of men, in that country, was sufficiently directed to his doctrine. They were also in possession of the Old Testament Scriptures, which, at that season, it was of the greatest importance they should consult, in order to compare the ancient predictions with what was then taking place. Immediately after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, his disciples, in the most public manner, and in the place where he had been crucified, proclaimed that event, and the whole of the doctrine which he had commanded them to preach. In this service they continued personally to labour for a considerable time, first among their countrymen the Jews, and then among the other nations. During the period between the resurrection and the publication of the New Testament, the churches possessed miraculous gifts, and the prophets were enabled to explain the predictions of the Old Testament, and to show their fulfilment.

After their doctrine had everywhere attracted attention, and, in spite of the most violent opposition, had forced its way through the civilized world ; and when churches, or societies of Christians were collected, not only in Judea, but in the most celebrated cities of Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor, the Scriptures of the New Testament were written by the Apostles and other inspired men, and intrusted to the keeping of these churches.

The whole of the New Testament was not written at once, but in different parts, and on various occasions.

Six of the Apostles, and two inspired disciples who accompanied them in their journeys, were employed in this work. The histories which it contains of the life of Christ, known by the name of the Gospels, were composed by four of his contemporaries, two of whom had been constant attendants on his public ministry. The first of these was published within a few years* after his death, in that very country where he had lived, and among the people who had seen him and observed his conduct. The history called the "Acts of the Apostles," which contains an account of their proceedings, and of the progress of the gospel, from Jerusalem, among the Gentile nations, was published about the year 64, being 30 years after our Lord's crucifixion, by one who, although not an Apostle, declares that he had "perfect understanding of all things from the very first," and who had written one of the Gospels. This book, commencing with a detail of proceedings, from the resurrection of Jesus Christ, carries down the evangelical history till the arrival of Paul as a prisoner at Rome. The Epistles, addressed to churches in particular places, to believers scattered up and down in different countries, or to individuals, in all twenty-one in number, were separately written by five of the Apostles, from seventeen to twenty, thirty, and thirty-five years after the death of Christ. Four of these writers had accompanied the Lord Jesus during his life, and had been "eye-witnesses of his majesty." The fifth was the Apostle Paul,

* "Some have thought that it was written no more than eight years after our Lord's ascension; others have reckoned it no fewer than fifteen."—*Campbell's Preface to Matthew's Gospel.*

who, as he expresses it, was "one born out of due time," but who had likewise seen Jesus Christ, and had been empowered by him to work miracles, which were "the signs of an apostle." One of the five also wrote the book of Revelation, about the year 96, addressed to seven churches in Asia, containing epistles to these churches from the Lord himself, with various instructions for the immediate use of all Christians, together with a prophetic view of the kingdom of God till the end of time. These several pieces, which compose the Scriptures of the New Testament, were received by the churches with the highest veneration; and, as the instructions they contain, though partially addressed, were equally intended for all, they were immediately copied, and handed about from one church to another, till each was in possession of the whole. The volume of the New Testament was thus completed before the death of the last of the Apostles, most of whom had sealed their testimony with their blood.

From the manner in which these Scriptures were at first circulated, some of their parts were necessarily longer of reaching certain places than others. These, of course, could not be so soon received into the canon as the rest. Owing to this circumstance, and to that of a few of the books being addressed to individual believers, or to their not having the name of their writers affixed, or the designation of Apostle added, a doubt for a time existed among some respecting the genuineness of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the 2d Epistle of Peter, the 2d and 3d Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the Book of Revelation. These, however, though not universally, were

generally acknowledged ; while all the other books of the New Testament were without dispute received from the beginning. This discrimination proves the scrupulous care of the first churches on this highly important subject.

At length these books, which had not at first been admitted, were, like the rest, universally received, not by the votes of a council, as is sometimes asserted, but after deliberate and free enquiry by many separate churches, under the superintending providence of God, in different parts of the world. It is at the same time a certain fact, that no other books besides those which at present compose the volume of the New Testament, were admitted by the churches. Several Apocryphal writings were published under the name of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, which are mentioned by the writers of the first four centuries, most of which have perished, though some are still extant. Few or none of them were composed before the second century, and several of them were forged so late as the third century. But they were not acknowledged as authentic by the first Christians, and were rejected, by those who have noticed them, as spurious and heretical.* Histories,

* “ These forged writings,” says Lardner, “ do not oppose, but confirm, the account given us in the canonical Scriptures. They all take for granted the dignity of our Lord’s person, and his power of working miracles ; they acknowledge the certainty of there having been such persons as Matthew and the other evangelists, and Peter and the other Apostles. They authenticate the general and leading facts contained in the New Testament. They presuppose that the Apostles received from Christ a commission to propagate his religion, and a supernatural power to enforce its authority. And thus they indirectly establish the truth and divine original of the Gospel.”

too, as might have been expected, were written of the life of Christ, and one forgery was attempted, of a letter said to be written by Jesus Christ himself to Abgarus, king of Edessa; but of the first, none were received as of any authority, and the last was universally rejected. "Besides our Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles," says Paley, "no Christian history, claiming to be written by an apostle, or apostolical man, is quoted within 300 years after the birth of Christ, by any writer now extant or known; or, if quoted, is quoted with marks of censure and rejection."

This agreement of Christians respecting the Scriptures, when we consider their many differences in other respects, is the more remarkable, since it took place without any public authority being interposed. "We have no knowledge," says the above author, "of any interference of authority in the question before the council of Laodicea, in the year 363. Probably the decree of this council rather declared than regulated the public judgment, or, more properly speaking, the judgment of some neighbouring churches—the council itself consisting of no more than thirty or forty bishops of Lydia and the adjoining countries. Nor does its authority seem to have extended farther." But the fact, that no public authority was interposed, does not require to be supported by the above reasoning. The churches at the beginning, being widely separated from each other, necessarily judged for themselves in this matter, and the decree of the council was founded on the coincidence of their judgment.

In delivering this part of his written revelation, God proceeded as he had done in the publication of the Old Testament Scriptures. For a considerable time, his

will was declared to mankind through the medium of oral tradition. At length he saw meet, in his wisdom, to give it a more permanent form. But this did not take place, till a nation, separated from all others, was provided for its reception. In the same manner, when Jesus Christ set up his kingdom in the world, of which the nation of Israel was a type, he first made known his will by means of verbal communication, through his servants whom he commissioned and sent out for that purpose; and when, through their means, he had prepared his subjects and collected them into churches, to be the depositaries of his Word, he caused it to be delivered to them in writing. His kingdom was not to consist of any particular nation, like that of Israel, but of all those individuals, in every part of the world, who should believe in his name. It was to be ruled, not by means of human authority, or compulsion of any kind, but solely by his authority. These sacred writings were thus intrusted to a people prepared for their reception—a nation among the nations, but singularly distinct from all the rest, who guarded and preserved them with the same inviolable attachment as the Old Testament Scriptures had experienced from the Jews.

Respecting the lateness of the time when the Scriptures of the New Testament were written, no objection can be offered, since they were published before that generation passed which had witnessed the transactions they record. The dates of these writings fall within the period of the lives of many, who were in full manhood when the Lord Jesus Christ was upon earth; and the facts detailed in the histories, and referred to in the Epistles, being of the most public nature, were

still open to full investigation. It must also be recollected, that the Apostles and disciples, during the whole intermediate period, were publicly proclaiming to the world the same things which were afterwards recorded in their writings.

Had these Scriptures been published before associations of Christians were in existence, to whose care could they have been intrusted? What security would there have been for their preservation, or that they would not have been corrupted? In the way which was adopted, they were committed to faithful men, who, viewing them as the charter of their own salvation, and the doctrine which they contained as the appointed means of rescuing their fellow creatures from misery and guilt, watched over their preservation with the most zealous and assiduous care.

But, unless the whole manner of communicating the revelation of God, in these Scriptures, had been altered, it is not possible, that, excepting the accounts of the life of Jesus Christ, they could have been earlier committed to writing. The history of the Acts of the Apostles, being carried down to about the year 63 of the Christian era, could not, it is evident, have been published sooner. The Epistles are not addressed to men of the world, or to the whole inhabitants of particular countries, but exclusively to believers. The truth conveyed in them is not delivered in an abstract form, but in the way of immediate application to existing cases and circumstances. This practical method of communicating the doctrine, and of recording the laws of the kingdom of Christ, which commends itself to every reflecting mind, could not, it is manifest, have been adopted till societies of Christians were in existence,

and till they had existed for some considerable time. In this way, too, we have an undeniable proof of the success of the Apostles in the rapid progress of the Gospel. We are acquainted, as we could not otherwise have been, with their zeal, resolution, self-denial, disinterestedness, patience, and meekness; and have the most convincing evidence of the extraordinary gifts they possessed. We are also furnished with indubitable evidence of the miraculous powers of the first Christians, as well as of their sincerity, courage, and patience.

Thus were the Scriptures, as we now possess them, delivered to the first churches. By the concurrent testimony of all antiquity, uniting friends and foes, they were received by Christians of different sects, and were constantly appealed to on all hands, in their controversies. Commentaries upon them were written at a very early period, and translations made into different languages. Formal catalogues of them were published, and they were attacked by the adversaries of Christianity, who not only did not question, but expressly admitted, the facts they contained, and that they were the genuine productions of the persons whose names they bore.

In this manner the Scriptures were also secured from the danger of being in any respect altered or vitiated. "The books of Scripture," says Augustine, "could not have been corrupted. If such an attempt had been made by any one, his design would have been prevented and defeated. His alterations would have been immediately detected by many and more ancient copies. The difficulty of succeeding in such an attempt is apparent hence, that the Scriptures were early

translated into divers languages, and copies of them were numerous. The alterations which any one attempted to make would have been soon perceived; just even as now, in fact, lesser faults in some copies are amended by comparing ancient copies or those of the original. . . . If any one," continues Augustine, "should charge you with having interpolated some texts alleged by you as favourable to your cause, what would you say? Would you not immediately answer that it is impossible for you to do such a thing in books read by all Christians? And that if any such attempt had been made by you, it would have been presently discerned and defeated by comparing the ancient copies? Well, then, for the same reason that the Scriptures cannot be corrupted by you, neither could they be corrupted by any other people."

Accordingly, the uniformity of the manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures that are extant, which are incomparably more numerous than those of any ancient author, and which are dispersed through so many countries, and in so great a variety of languages, is truly astonishing. It demonstrates both the veneration in which the Scriptures have always been held, and the singular care that has been taken in transcribing them. The number of various readings, that by the most minute and laborious investigation and collations of manuscripts have been discovered in them, said to amount to one hundred and fifty thousand, though at first sight they may seem calculated to diminish confidence in the sacred text, yet in no degree whatever do they affect its credit and integrity. They consist almost wholly in palpable errors in transcription, grammatical and verbal differences, such as the insertion or omission

of a letter or article, the substitution of a word for its equivalent, the transposition of a word or two in a sentence. Taken altogether, they neither change nor affect a single doctrine or duty announced or enjoined in the Word of God.* When, therefore, we consider the great antiquity of the sacred books, the almost infinite number of copies, of versions, of editions, which have been made of them in all languages—in languages which have not any analogy one with another, among nations differing so much in their customs and their religious opinions;—when we consider these things, it is truly astonishing, and can only be ascribed to the watchful providence of God over his own word, that amongst the various readings, nothing essential can be discerned, which relates to either precept or doctrine, or which breaks that connexion, that unity which subsists in all the various parts of divine revelation, and which demonstrates the whole to be the work of one and the same Spirit.

In proof that the Scriptures were published and delivered to the churches in the age to which their dates refer, we have the attestation of a connected chain of Christian writers, from that period to the present day. No fewer than six of these authors, part of whose works are still extant, were contemporaries of the Apostles.

BARNABAS was the companion of the Apostle Paul. He is the author of an epistle, which was well known

* Dr Kennicott examined and collated 600 Hebrew manuscripts, and so trifling were the variations he discovered, that it has been objected, though very unjustly, that he had effected nothing by all his labours.

among the early Christians. It is still extant, and refers to the Apostolic writings.

CLEMENT was the third bishop of the church in Rome, and is mentioned by Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians. He has left a long Epistle, which is extant, though not entire, written in name of the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, in which the latter is admonished to adhere to the commands of Christ. Irenæus says that it was written by Clement, "who had seen the blessed Apostles, and conversed with them; who had the preaching of the apostles still sounding in his ears, and their traditions before his eyes. Nor he alone, for there were then still many alive, who had been taught by the Apostles. In the time, therefore, of this Clement, when there was no small dissension among the brethren at Corinth, the church at Rome sent a most excellent letter to the Corinthians, persuading them to peace among themselves." About 80 or 90 years after this letter was written, Dionysius, the Bishop at Corinth, declares, that "it had been wont to be read in that church from ancient times." It contains several quotations from the New Testament Scriptures, and allusions to them.

HERMAS, also contemporary with the Apostles, has left a book that still remains, called "The Shepherd of Hermas," in which he quotes and enforces the doctrine of Scripture.

IGNATIUS was bishop of the church at Antioch, about 37 years after Christ's ascension. He suffered martyrdom at Rome under the Emperor Trajan. Ignatius has left several Epistles that are still extant, which give testimony to Jesus Christ and his doctrine.

He declares, that he “ fled to the Gospels as the flesh of Jesus, and to the Apostles as the elders of the church.”

POLYCARP had been taught by the Apostles, and had conversed with many who had seen Christ. He was appointed by the Apostles Bishop of the church at Smyrna. One epistle of his still remains, which evinces the respect that he and other Christians bore for the Scriptures. Irenæus, who, in his youth, had been a disciple of Polycarp, says, concerning him, in a letter to Florinus,—“ I saw you when I was very young, in the Lower Asia with Polycarp. For I better remember the affairs of that time, than those which have lately happened; the things which we learn in our childhood growing up with the soul and uniting themselves to it. Insomuch, that I can tell the place in which the blessed Polycarp sat and taught, and his going out and coming in, and the manner of his life, and the form of his person, and the discourses he made to the people; and how he related his conversation with John, and others who had seen the Lord, and how he related their sayings, and what he had heard from them concerning the Lord; both concerning his miracles and his doctrine, as he had received them from the eye-witnesses of the Word of Life; all which Polycarp related agreeably to the Scriptures. These things I then, through the mercy of God toward me, diligently heard and attended to, recording them not on paper, but upon my heart. And through the grace of God I continually renew the remembrance of them.” Polycarp was condemned to the flames at Smyrna, the proconsul being present, and all the people in the amphitheatre demanding his death. Thus, like Igna-

tius, he confirmed his testimony to the Scriptures with his blood.

PAPIAS was a hearer of the Apostle John, and a companion of Polycarp. He was the author of five books, which are now lost, but which, according to quotations from them that remain, bore testimony to the Scriptures. He expressly ascribes their respective Gospels to Matthew and Mark.

The above six writers had all lived and conversed with some of the Apostles. Those parts which remain of the writings of the first five, who are called the Apostolical Fathers, are valuable by their antiquity; and all of them contain some important testimony to the Scriptures.

About twenty years after these writers follows JUSTIN MARTYR. He was born about the year 89, and suffered martyrdom about the year 163. Originally he had been a Heathen philosopher; and, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, he relates the circumstances of his conversion to Christianity. From his works might be extracted almost a complete life of Christ; and he uniformly represents the Scriptures as containing the authentic account of his doctrine. The Gospels, he says, were read and expounded every Sunday in the solemn assemblies of the Christians. He particularly mentions the Acts of the Apostles, along with the books of the Old Testament, which were also regularly read, as in the Jewish synagogues; and he appeals to the Scriptures as writings open to all the world, and read by Jews and Gentiles. He presented two Apologies for the Christian religion; the first to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, in the year 140; the second to Marcus Antoninus, the philosopher,

in the year 162. Both these Apologies are still extant; the first entire, of the second the beginning is wanting.

DIONYSIUS, TATIAN, and HEGESIPPUS, wrote about thirty years after Justin Martyr, and give their testimony to the Scriptures. Hegesippus relates, that, travelling from Palestine to Rome, he visited in his journey many bishops; and that "in every succession, and in every city, the same doctrine is taught which the law and the prophets and the Lord teacheth."

About the year 177, the churches of Lyons and Vienne in France sent a relation of the persecutions they suffered to the churches in Asia and Phrygia. POTHINUS, bishop of the church at Lyons, was then 90 years old; and in his early life was contemporary with the Apostle John. This letter, which is preserved entire, makes exact references to the Scriptures.

IRENÆUS succeeded Pothinus as bishop at Lyons. In his youth, as already noticed, he had been a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of the Apostle John. Thus he was only one step removed from the Apostles. Irenæus gives a most ample testimony, both to the genuineness and the authenticity of the Scriptures. "We have not received," says he, "the knowledge of the way of our salvation by any others than those by whom the gospel has been brought to us; which gospel they first preached, and afterwards, by the will of God, committed to writing, that it might be for time to come the foundation and pillar of our faith. —For after that our Lord rose from the dead, and they (the Apostles) were endued from above with the power of the Holy Ghost coming down upon them, they received a perfect knowledge of all things. They then

went forth to all the ends of the earth, declaring to men the blessing of heavenly peace, having, all of them, and every one alike, the gospel of God. Matthew, then among the Jews, wrote a Gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel at Rome, and founding a church there. And after their exit (death or departure), Mark also, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us in writing the things that had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the Gospel preached by him (Paul). Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon his breast, he likewise published a Gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia. And all these have delivered to us, that there is one God, the maker of the heaven and the earth, declared by the law and the prophets, and one Christ, the Son of God. And he who does not assent to them, despiseth indeed those who knew the mind of the Lord; but he despiseth also Christ himself the Lord, and he despiseth likewise the Father, and is self-condemned, resisting and opposing his own salvation, as all heretics do.”—“The tradition of the Apostles hath spread itself over the whole universe; and all they who search after the sources of truth, will find this tradition to be held sacred in every church. We might enumerate all those who have been appointed bishops to those churches by the Apostles, and all their successors up to our days. It is by this uninterrupted succession that we have received the tradition which actually exists in the church, and also the doctrine of truth as it is preached by the Apostles.”

After giving some reasons why he supposed the

number of the Gospels was precisely four, Irenæus says, “ Whence it is manifest that the Word, the Former of all things, who sits upon the cherubim, and upholds all things, having appeared to men, has given to us a Gospel of a fourfold character, but joined in one spirit.—The Gospel according to John discloses his primary and glorious generation from the Father: ‘ In the beginning was the Word.’—But the Gospel according to Luke, being of a priestly character, begins with Zacharias the priest offering incense to God.—Matthew relates his generation, which is according to men: ‘ The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.’—Mark begins from the prophetic spirit which came down from above to men, saying, ‘ The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Esaias the prophet.’ ”

The above passage distinctly ascertains, that the four Gospels, as we have them, and no more, were equally received and acknowledged by the first churches.

Irenæus further says, “ The Gospel according to Matthew was written to the Jews, for they earnestly desired a Messiah of the seed of David; and Matthew, having also the same desire to a yet greater degree, strove by all means to give them full satisfaction that Christ was of the seed of David, wherefore he began with his genealogy.”—“ Wherefore also Mark, the interpreter and follower of Peter, makes this the beginning of his evangelic writing, ‘ The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.’ And in the end of the Gospel, Mark says, ‘ So then, the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was received up into Heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.’ ”—

“ But if any one rejects Luke, as if he did not know the truth, he will be convicted of throwing away the Gospel of which he professeth to be a disciple. For there are many, and those very necessary, parts of the Gospel, which we know by his means.” He then refers to several particulars, which are known only from Luke.

The Acts of the Apostles is a book much quoted by Irenæus, as written by Luke, the companion of the Apostles. There are few things recorded in that book which have not been mentioned by him. “ And that Luke,” says he, “ was inseparable from Paul, and his fellow-worker in the Gospel, he himself shows, not boasting of it indeed, but obliged to it for the sake of truth.”

Irenæus quotes largely from the Epistles of Paul; and remarks, that this Apostle “ frequently uses hyperbata” (or transpositions of words from their natural order), “ because of the rapidity of his words, and because of the mighty force of ‘ the Spirit in him.’” The book of Revelation Irenæus often quotes, and says, “ It was seen no long time ago, but almost in our own age, at the end of the reign of Domitian.” He mentions the code of the Old Testament and of the New, and calls the one, as well as the other, the Oracles of God.

Speaking of the Scriptures in general, he says, “ well knowing that the Scriptures are perfect, as being dictated by the word of God and his Spirit.”—“ A heavy punishment awaits those who add to or take from the Scriptures.”—“ But we, following the one and the only true God as our teacher, and having his words as a

rule of truth, do all always speak the same things concerning the same things."

ATHENAGORAS, MILTIADES, THEOPHILUS, and PANTÆNUS, who lived at the same time with Irenæus, all bear testimony to the Scriptures. Some of their works remain, and others are lost.

CLEMENT of Alexandria followed Irenæus at the distance of sixteen years. He was a man of great learning, and presided in the Catechetical School at Alexandria. Clement travelled into different countries in search of information. "The law and the prophets, together with the Gospels," he says, "conduct to one and the same knowledge in the name of Christ."—"One God and Almighty Lord is taught by the law and the prophets, and the blessed Gospels." He has given a distinct account of the order in which the four Gospels were written. The Gospels which contain the genealogies were, he says, written first, Mark's next, and John's the last. He repeatedly quotes the four Gospels by the names of their authors, and expressly ascribes the Acts of the Apostles to Luke. His quotations from the Scriptures of the New Testament are numerous, and he calls them "the Scriptures of the Lord," and the "true evangelical canon."

Next to Clement, and in the same age, comes TERTULLIAN, who was born at Carthage about the year 160. He was a man of extensive learning, and the most considerable of all the Latin writers on Christianity. He wrote a very valuable Apology for the Christians, about the year 198, addressed to the governors of provinces, which is still extant. He gives the most ample attestation to the Scriptures, quoting them so frequently, that, as Lardner observes, there are

more and longer quotations of the small volume of the New Testament in this one Christian author, than there are of all the works of Cicero in writers of all characters for several ages. After enumerating many churches which had been gathered by Paul and the other Apostles, he declares, that not those churches only which were called Apostolical, but all (who have fellowship with them in the same faith) received the four Gospels, and that these had been in the possession of the churches from the beginning. He also declares, that the original manuscripts of the Apostles, at least some of them, were preserved till the age in which he lived, and were then to be seen.

“In the first place,” says Tertullian, “we lay this down for a certain truth, that the Evangelic Scriptures have for their authors the Apostles, to whom the work of publishing the gospel was committed by the Lord himself, and also Apostolical men.—Among the Apostles, John and Matthew teach us the faith; among Apostolical men, Luke and Mark refresh it, going upon the same principles as concerning the one God, the Creator, and his Christ born of a virgin, the accomplishment of the law and the prophets.—If it be certain that that is most genuine which is most ancient, that most ancient which is from the beginning, and that from the beginning which is from the Apostles; in like manner, it will be also certain that that has been delivered from the Apostles which is held sacred in the churches of the Apostles. Let us then see what milk the Corinthians received from Paul, to what rule the Galatians were reduced, what the Philippians read, what the Thessalonians, the Ephesians, and also the Romans recite, who are near to us; with whom both

Peter and Paul left the Gospel sealed with their blood. We have also churches which are the disciples of John ; for, though Marcion rejects his Revelation, the succession of bishops, traced up to the beginning, will show it to have John for its author. We know also the original of other churches (that is, that they are Apostolical). I say, then, that with them, but not with them only that are Apostolical, but with all who have fellowship with them in the same faith, is that Gospel of Luke received, which we so zealously maintain." That is, the genuine entire Gospel of Luke, not that which had been curtailed and altered by Marcion. "The same authority of the Apostolical churches will support the other Gospels, which we have from them, and according to them (that is, according to their copies), I mean John's and Matthew's, although that likewise which Mark published may be said to be Peter's, whose interpreter Mark was, for Luke's digest also is often ascribed to Paul." Tertullian says that Matthew's Gospel began in this manner, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." The Acts of the Apostles are often quoted by him under that title : he calls them Luke's Commentary, or History.

"I will," says Tertullian, "by no means say Gods nor Lords, but I will follow the Apostle; so that, if the Father and the Son are to be mentioned together, I will say God the Father, and Jesus Christ the Lord ; but when I mention Christ only, I can call him God, as the Apostle does." "*Of whom Christ came, who is,*" says he, "*over all, God blessed for ever.*"

To Tertullian succeeds a multitude of Christian writers. Of the works of these authors, only fragments

and quotations remain, in which several testimonies to the Gospels are found. In one of them is an abstract of the whole Gospel history.

After those writers, and at the distance of twenty-five years from Tertullian, comes the celebrated ORIGEN of Alexandria, of whom it is said, that "he did not so much recommend Christianity by what he preached, or by what he wrote, as by the general tenor of his life." He was born about 150 years after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the quantity of his writings he exceeded the most laborious of the Greek and Latin writers. He gives full and decisive testimony to the Scriptures. He says, "that the four Gospels alone are received without dispute by the whole church of God under heaven;" and he subjoins a history of their respective authors. "The first," says Origen, "is written by Matthew, once a publican, afterwards an Apostle of Jesus Christ. The second is that according to Mark, who wrote it as Peter dictated to him, who therefore calls him his son, in his Catholic Epistle. The third is that according to Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, published for the sake of the Gentile converts. Lastly, that according to John." He speaks of the Acts of the Apostles as an uncontested book, and gives the same account concerning Mark's Gospel as having been written under the direction of the Apostle Peter, which is given by Clement. It is reckoned a monument of the humility of Peter, that several very remarkable circumstances in his favour, related by the other Evangelists, are not mentioned, or even hinted at, by Mark.

Origen uniformly quotes the Epistle to the Hebrews as the writing of the Apostle Paul, and the Book of Revelation as the writing of the Apostle John. His

quotations of Scripture are so numerous, that Dr Mill says, "if we had all his works remaining, we should have before us almost the whole text of the Bible." He expresses, in the most unqualified terms, his opinion of the authority of the books of the New Testament as inspired writings, and says, that "the sacred books are not writings of men, but have been written and delivered to us from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by the will of the Father of all, through Jesus Christ." He urges, with earnestness, the reading of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, as a sacred obligation in the churches of Christ. "Food," says he, "is eaten, physic is taken; though the good effect is not presently perceived, a benefit is expected in time, and may be obtained. So it is with the Holy Scriptures; though, at the very time of reading of them, there be no sensible advantage, yet, in the end, they will be thought profitable for strengthening virtuous dispositions, and weakening the habits of vice.—The true food of the rational nature is the word of God.—Let us come daily to the wells of the Scriptures, the waters of the Holy Spirit, and there draw and carry thence a full vessel. The greatest torment of demons is to see men reading the Word of God, and labouring to understand the Divine law."

In his Apology for the Christian Religion, in answer to Celsus the Epicurean philosopher, Origen, when giving a quotation from Scripture, says that it is written, "not in any private book, or such as are read by a few persons only, but in books read by every body." In that Apology, he has preserved, from the writings of Celsus, most distinct and complete attestations to the gospel history.

GREGORY, Bishop at Neocesaria, and DIONYSIUS of Alexandria, scholars of Origen, and the well-known CYPRIAN, Bishop at Carthage, come about twenty years after Origen. Their writings abound with copious quotations from the Scriptures, to which they give their full and particular attestation. Cyprian says, "The church is watered, like Paradise, by four rivers, that is, four Gospels."

Within forty years after Cyprian, VICTORINUS, Bishop at Pettaw, in Germany, and a multitude of Christian writers, all testify their profound respect for the Scriptures.

About the year 306, ARNOBIUS and LACTANTIUS wrote in support of the Christian religion. Lactantius argues in its defence, from the consistency, simplicity, disinterestedness, and sufferings of the writers of the Gospels. Arnobius vindicates the credit of the writers of the Gospels, observing, that they were eye-witnesses of the facts which they relate, and that their ignorance of the arts of composition was rather a confirmation of their testimony, than an objection to it.

EUSEBIUS, Bishop at Cæsarea, born about the year 270, wrote about fifteen years after the above authors. He composed a History of Christianity, from its origin to his own time; and has handed down many valuable extracts of ancient authors, whose works have perished. In giving his testimony to the Scriptures, he shows himself to be much conversant in the works of Christian authors, and he appears to have collected every thing that had been said, before his own time, respecting the volume of the New Testament.

ATHANASIUS became bishop at Alexandria about the year 326. He expressly affirms that every one of

the books of the New Testament that we now receive, are inspired Scriptures, which he specifies in their order, and ascribes them to the writers whose names they bear. He represents them as constantly and publicly read in the Christian churches. Athanasius had full access to every source of information, and applied himself to ascertain the canon of the Old Testament as well as of the New. It appears that he sent to the Emperor Constance a copy of the whole Bible, which he described as the whole inspired Scriptures. Speaking of the Scriptures, he says, "These are fountains of salvation. In them alone the doctrine of religion is taught. Let no man add to them, or take any thing from them."

It is unnecessary to carry down this chain of historical evidence further. The Council of Nice was called by Constantine in the year 325; and as Christianity had then become the established religion of the Roman empire, its history is afterwards inseparably interwoven with every thing connected with the state of the world.

From the above numerous and early writers, we have most unquestionable attestations to the integrity and authority of the Holy Scriptures. First, we have six writers who were contemporary with the Apostles, and then eleven more who lived in distant parts of the world, regularly succeeding each other during the first hundred years after the Apostles. From that period, the chain of evidence continues unbroken and uninterrupted. "When Christian advocates," says Paley, "merely tell us that we have the same reason for believing the Gospels to be written by the Evangelists whose names they bear, as we have for believing the

Commentaries to be Cæsar's, the *Æneid* Virgil's, or the Orations Cicero's, they content themselves with an imperfect representation. They state nothing more than what is true, but they do not state the truth correctly. In the number, variety, and early date of our testimonies, we far exceed all other ancient books. For one which the most celebrated work of the most celebrated Greek or Roman writer can allege, we produce many."

The force of the above testimony is greatly strengthened by the consideration, that it is the concurring evidence of separate, independent, and well-informed writers, who lived in countries remote from one another. Clement lived at *Rome*; Ignatius, at *Antioch*; Polycarp, at *Smyrna*; Justin Martyr, in *Syria*; Irenæus, in *France*; Tertullian, at *Carthage*; Origen, in *Egypt*; Eusebius, at *Cæsarea*; Victorinus, in *Germany*. The dangers which they encountered, and the hardships and persecutions which they suffered, some of them even unto death, on account of their adherence to the Christian faith, give irresistible weight to their testimony.

"No writings," says Augustine, "ever had a better testimony afforded them than those of the Apostles and Evangelists. Nor does it weaken the credit and authority of books, received by the church of Christ from the beginning, that some other writings have been, without ground, and falsely, ascribed to the Apostles. For the like has happened, for instance, to Hippocrates; but yet his genuine works are distinguished from others which have been published under his name. We know the writings of the Apostles as we know the works of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Varro,

and others, to be theirs, and as we know the writings of divine ecclesiastical authors; for as much as they have the testimony of contemporaries, and of those who have lived in succeeding times. I might, moreover, by way of illustration, produce for examples those now in hand. Suppose some one, in time to come, should deny those to be the works of Faustus, or those to be mine; how should he be satisfied but by the testimony of those of this time who knew both, and have transmitted their accounts to others? And shall not, then, the testimony of the churches, and Christian brethren, be valid here; especially when they are so numerous, and so harmonious, and the tradition is with so much ease and certainty traced down from the Apostles to our time—I say, shall any be so foolish and unreasonable as to deny or dispute the credibility of such a testimony to the Scriptures, which would be allowed in behalf of any writings whatever, whether heathen or ecclesiastical?”

In another place Augustine observes, “If you here ask us, how we know these to be the writings of the Apostles; in brief we answer, in the same way that you know the epistles, or any other writings, of Mani, to be his: for if any one should be pleased to dispute with you, and offer to deny the epistles ascribed to Mani to be his, what would you do? Would you not laugh at the assurance of the man who denied the genuineness of writings generally allowed? As therefore it is certain those books are Mani’s, and he would be ridiculous who should now dispute it; so certain is it that the Manichees deserve to be laughed at, or rather ought to be pitied, who dispute the truth and genuineness of those writings of the Apostles, which

have been handed down as theirs from their time to this, through an uninterrupted succession of well-known witnesses."

Should it occur to any that to prove the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures by the testimony of the Fathers, is to sanction the traditions of the Church of Rome, they ought to consider that there is a radical distinction between these two cases. Testimony is a first principle, universally acknowledged as authoritative in its own province, as far as it is unexceptionable. The whole business of the world proceeds on this principle, and without it human affairs would run into utter confusion. That historical testimony is a legitimate source of evidence, the general sentiments of mankind admit, in the universal appeal to history for the knowledge of past events. Historical testimony may be false, but this is not peculiar to this class of first principles. We are liable to be deceived on all subjects to which our faculties are directed; but there are means by which historical evidence may be ascertained. Its proof may vary from the lowest degree of probability to the highest degree of certainty. Of many things recorded even in profane history, we can have no more doubt than we can have of truths that contain their own evidence. Now, the stress laid on the testimony of the ancient writers that have been quoted, is warranted by the most cautious laws of historical evidence; and it cannot be rejected, without entirely rejecting history as a legitimate ground of knowledge. That such writers did give such testimony, is as indisputable as any historical fact can be. And the proof of this lies open to every man who has time, opportunity, and ability to examine the subject.

If so, there is no reason to reject as insufficient, in proof of the authenticity of the Bible, the same kind of evidence that is allowed to prove any other fact. But the traditions of the Church of Rome are not of this nature. They are not historical at all. They have not been written; they are nowhere to be found. It is not pretended by their friends that they possess historical evidence. They are recommended altogether on another foundation,—the authority of the church. It is said the church has had them treasured up in secret; but this being a mere figment, incapable of proof, and evidently absurd, can give no assurance whatever of the authenticity of the Scriptures. The difference, then, between the two cases, is manifest and essential. And clearer historical proof cannot be exhibited on any subject, than has been adduced for the genuineness and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.

It has been supposed that, if a list of the names and numbers of the books of Scripture had been recorded in any part of the canon, it would have added to our certainty respecting the Divine original of the whole. But if there were such a list, it would still remain to be decided whether the books we possess were the very books named, in words and substance, as well as in name. Indeed if the list were written, and the number of lines and words recorded, the case would still be the same. It would not in the smallest degree add to our certainty respecting their Divine original; for how could we be assured of that inspired list, but from the certainty of the book being from God that contained the list? Such a list could neither ascertain its own accuracy, nor the authenticity of the book which contained it. The authenticity of that list

must have been ascertained precisely in the same manner as that of each and all of the books is now ascertained.

If, therefore, the name and number of the inspired books were contained in any epistle, it would still leave the authority of the books named, on the same foundation of the authority of the epistle in which they were named ; and that authority must have been ascertained exactly in the same way by which we now ascertain the authority of each and all of the inspired books. The ultimate foundation, then, of the evidence would be the *same*, as to that particular part which contained the list ; and, with respect to the books mentioned in the list, we could not be assured against their mutilation and corruption. It is quite absurd, then, to suppose that a list of the names and numbers of the inspired books would have given us better evidence of their authority. The authority of that part which contained such a list, must be ascertained in the ordinary way ; and, as the stream cannot rise higher than the fountain, the authority of all the books, as resting on the testimony of one, would be no stronger than that of the one which supported them. In whatever way that one could prove its Divine authority, in the same way we now prove the authority of all.

The circumstance, then, that there is not a list of the books of inspiration contained in the page of inspiration itself, does not lessen the certainty as to the canon, nor increase the difficulty of ascertaining the truth of it. That if a list of the books of Scripture were given in the Scriptures, it would not fix the question of the canon on a surer foundation, is obvious too, from the consideration that a forger might contain

such a list, as well as an authentic document, and that the truth of such a list takes it for granted that the book which contains it is canonical. Is the second epistle of Peter put above the first, as to the certainty of its being canonical, by the assertion, "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you?" Does such an expression establish its being canonical? Is it not evident, on the contrary, that the epistle's being canonical must be established before the assertion, "This second epistle I now write unto you," is believed to be inspired? So far from such a list proving that the books which contain it are canonical, it is their being canonical that verifies the list. If the claim of a book of Scripture to be canonical is not ascertained, the list which it contains is not revelation. With respect to the books of the Old Testament, however, such a list is in effect given, and the inspiration of them warranted in the assertion, "All Scripture is given by inspiration." Now, the steps by which we arrive at certainty here, are few and simple. If the book of the New Testament which contains this assertion is canonical, it warrants all the books of the Old Testament which at the time of its publication were received as Scripture. We have only to enquire what books were then contained in the Jewish canon, to be assured in this matter. This is a point of testimony on which no difficulty exists. It must be observed, however, that the confidence placed in the list, or notification, rests entirely upon the authenticity of the book that contains it being previously ascertained. But if a list of the whole of the inspired books is the only thing that could ascertain with sufficient evidence such as are from God, then no man can have a thorough faith in

the Scriptures, for such a list has not been given. And had it been given, it could not have secured against forgery, as has been already noticed, for nothing is easier than for a forger to give such a list. Had the Scriptures been a forgery, they would probably have recommended themselves by a very correct list.

It has been asserted that "the question of the canon is a point of erudition, not of Divine revelation." This is to undermine both the certainty and the importance of the sacred canon. The assertion, that the question of the canon is *not a point of revelation*, is false. It is not true either of the Old Testament, or of the New. The integrity of the canon of the Old Testament, is a matter of revelation, as much as any thing contained in the Bible. This is attested, as has been shown, by the whole nation of the Jews, to whom it was committed, and their fidelity to the truth has been avouched by the Lord and his Apostles. Is not this revelation? The integrity of the canon of the New Testament is equally a point of revelation. As God had said to the Jews, "Ye are my witnesses," and as they "received the lively oracles to give unto us," Acts vii. 38; so the Lord Jesus said to the Apostles, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The first churches received the New Testament Scriptures from these witnesses of the Lord, and thus had inspired authority for those books. It was not left to erudition or reasoning to collect, that they were a revelation from God. This the first Christians knew from the testimony of those who wrote them. They could not be more assured that the things taught were from God, than they were that the writings which contained them

were from God. The integrity of the sacred canon is, then, a matter of revelation, conveyed to us by testimony, like every thing contained in the Scriptures.

While it has been denied that the question of the canon is a point of revelation, it has been asserted that it is a point of erudition. But erudition has nothing further to do with the question, than as it may be employed in conveying to us the testimony. Erudition did not produce the revelation of the canon. If the canon had not been a point of revelation, erudition could never have made it so ; for erudition can create nothing ; it can only investigate and confirm truth, and testify to that which exists, or detect error. We receive the canon of Scripture by revelation, in the same way that the Jews received the law which was given from Mount Sinai. Only one generation of the Jews witnessed the giving of the law ; but to all the future generations of that people, it was equally a matter of revelation. The knowledge of this was conveyed to them by testimony. In the same way, Christians, in their successive generations, receive the canon of Scripture as a matter of revelation. The testimony through which this is received, must indeed be translated from a foreign language ; but so must the account brought to us of any occurrence the most trivial that takes place in a foreign country. If in this sense the question of the canon be called a point of erudition, the gospel itself must be called a point of erudition ; for it, too, must be translated from the original language in which it was announced, as also must every thing which the Scriptures contain. When a preacher inculcates, the belief of the gospel, or of a doctrine of Scripture, or obedience to any duty, would he be war-

ranted in telling his audience that these are questions of erudition, not of Divine revelation? Erudition may be allowed its full value, without suspending on it the authority of the Word of God.

The assertion that the question of the canon is a point of erudition, not of Divine revelation, is subversive of the whole of revelation. We have no way of knowing that the miracles related in the Scriptures were wrought, and that the doctrines inculcated were taught, but by testimony and the internal evidence of the books themselves. We have the evidence of miracles, as that evidence comes to us by the testimony which vouches the authenticity of the inspired books. As far as the genuineness and authenticity of any book are brought into suspicion, so far is every thing contained in it brought into suspicion. For it should always be remembered, that there is no greater absurdity than to question the claim of a book to a place in the canon, and at the same time to acknowledge its contents to be a revelation from God. There can be no evidence that the doctrines of Scripture are revealed truths, unless we are certain that the books of Scripture are revelation. If the books which compose the canon are not matter of revelation, then we have no revelation. If the truth of the canon be not established to us as matter of revelation, then the books of which it is composed are not so established; and if the books be not so, then not one sentence of them, nor one doctrine or precept which they contain, comes established to us as a revelation from God. If, then, the question of the canon be a point of erudition, not of Divine revelation, so is every doctrine which the Scriptures contain; for the doctrine cannot be

assured revelation, if the book that contains it be not assured revelation. There can be no higher evidence of the doctrine being revelation, than of the book that contains it; and thus were not the canon a matter of Divine revelation, the whole Bible would be stripped of Divine authority. Any thing, therefore, that goes to unsettle the canon, goes to unsettle every doctrine contained in the canon.

Without a particular revelation to every individual, it does not appear that the authority of the canon could be ascertained to us in any other way than it is at present. The whole of the Scriptures was given at first by revelation, and afterwards this revelation was confirmed by ordinary means. The testimony concerning it has been handed down in the churches from one generation to another. On this, and on their own internal characteristics of being Divine, we receive the Scriptures with the most unsuspecting confidence, and on the same ground the Jews received the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In these ways, it is fixed by Divine authority, and not left in any uncertainty; for if its truth can be ascertained by ordinary means, it is fixed by the authority of God, as much as if an angel from Heaven were every day to proclaim it over the earth. When Paul says, that his handwriting of the salutation was the token in every epistle, he at once shows us the importance of the canon, and warrants us in receiving it as a Divine revelation attested by ordinary means. Those to whom he wrote had no other way of knowing the handwriting of the Apostle than that by which they knew any other handwriting. Even at that time the churches knew the genuineness of the epistles sent to them by ordinary means; and

Paul's authority warrants this as sufficient. We have, then, the authority of revelation for resting the canon on the ordinary sources of human evidence, and they are such as to preclude the possibility of deception. The claim of the Epistles sent to the first churches, and of the doctrine they contain as Divine, rested even to those churches on the same kind of evidence on which we now receive them. It is very important to settle what kind of evidence is sufficient for our receiving the Scriptures. Many have rated this too high, and as the Scriptures contain a revelation, they wished to have them attested to every age by revelation, which is, in fact, requiring the continuance of miraculous interference, which it might easily be shown would be pernicious.

With respect to the validity of the internal evidence on which the canon is received, an important argument may be founded on John, iv. 39. From the account of the woman of Samaria there related, we learn the kind of evidence on which the Lord Jesus was acknowledged while on earth. The foundation of this woman's faith was the Lord's having told her all things that ever she did. This was sufficient for her to recognise him as a prophet, or as one sent of God; and, consequently, when he declared to her that he was the Messiah, she had sufficient ground to believe so, for God would not enable any one to tell her such things in order to deceive. For if there was evidence from what he said that he was sent by God, there was evidence from his assertion that he was the Messiah. From verse 41 of the same chapter, we learn, that "many more believed because of his own word;" and that they did so, and that the woman believed, are

exhibited to us, not only as facts, but as valid grounds of belief. Jesus had not worked any miracle, and the reason why they believed on him, is expressly stated to be because of his own word. If then, the word of Jesus, unaccompanied by miracle, was a sufficient ground of faith when he spoke, it is equally valid in writing. From hearing him, the people of Samaria could assert, with confidence, that they themselves knew that he was indeed the Christ. And from reading the Scriptures, the same satisfactory evidence is obtained. In reading the Scriptures, we are often so struck with their evidence, that, independently of any other proof, we firmly believe that they come from God. We are often most forcibly convinced by evidence which we could hardly state intelligibly to others. The Apostles still commend themselves to every man's conscience, and we feel the force of the question, "What is the chaff to the wheat,—is not my word like a fire?" Must, then, the illiterate man receive the Scriptures as a question of erudition; Must the canonical authority of an epistle that recommends itself as the light of heaven, depend on questions of erudition?

Christians receive the Holy Scriptures on the authority of God, as declared by his inspired messengers, so that they are received on the ground of revelation. The illiterate are equally bound to receive them in this way, and interested in so doing, as the learned. As all are to be judged by them, it was necessary that all should have full assurance that they are from God; and it is matter of express revelation, that nothing but hatred of the light, and the love of darkness, prevents any man who reads them from receiving the truth.

Both the old Testament and the New come to us stamped with the authority of Him who is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," and of those to whom God bore "witness both with signs and wonders, and diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost," and also with their own internal evidence of being divine. And if any portion of them be set aside as uninspired, or if any addition be made to them, it is done in spite of that authority and that evidence.

If we displace from the canon any one of those books that have been sanctioned by the recognition of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles, we overturn the authority on which the rest are held, and invite the evil propensities of our nature to quarrel with any thing in the Bible to which we find a disrelish. Those who hold that the question of the canon is open to discussion, and who set aside any part of it on the ground of either external or internal evidence, cannot be said to have a Bible. Their Bible will be longer or shorter, according to their researches; and a fixed standard they can never have.

If it be asked, should we be precluded from enquiring into the grounds on which the canon is received, it is replied, certainly not. But we should remember that the permanent ground on which it stands is testimony; and such must be the ground of every historical fact. Internal evidence may confirm the authenticity of a book sanctioned by the canon, but to suspend belief till we receive such confirmation, argues an ignorance of the principles of evidence. A book might be inspired, when no such internal confirmation, from the nature of the subject, might be found. And when a book is

substantially approved, by testimony, as belonging to the canon, no evidence can, by a Christian, be legitimately supposed possible, in opposition to its inspiration. This would be to suppose valid objections to first principles. Sufficient testimony deserves the same rank as a first principle, with axioms themselves. Axioms are not more necessary than testimony, to all the business of human life. Internal evidence may be sufficient to prove that a book is not Divine; but it is absurd to suppose that such a book can have valid testimony, and therefore it can never be supposed by a Christian, that any of those books that are received as part of the sacred canon, on the authority of sufficient testimony, can contain any internal marks of imposture. This would be to suppose the possibility of the clashing of two first principles. The thing that can be proved by a legitimate first principle, can never be disproved by another legitimate first principle. This would be to suppose that God is not the author of the human constitution. If, then, in a book recognised by the canon, as the Song of Solomon, we find matter which to our wisdom does not appear to be worthy of inspiration, we may be assured that we mistake. For if that book is authenticated by testimony as a part of the sacred Scriptures, which the Lord Jesus Christ sanctioned, it is authenticated by a first principle, to which God has bound us, by the constitution of our nature, to submit. If, in this instance, or in any particular instance, we reject it, our own conduct in other things will be our condemnation. There is no first principle in the constitution of man that can enable him to reject any thing in the Song of Solomon, coming, as it does, under the sanction of a first principle.

Those persons who reject any books of the canon on such grounds, would show themselves much more rational, as well as more humble Christians, if, recognising the paramount authority of a first principle universally acknowledged, they would receive the Song of Solomon and the book of Esther, or any other of the books that they now reject, as parts of the Word of God, and humbly endeavour to gain from them the instruction and edification which, as Divine books, they must be calculated to give. This questioning of the canon, then, proceeds on infidel and irrational principles, which, if carried to their legitimate length, must end in complete unbelief.

“According to your way of proceeding,” observes Augustine, in reference to those who supposed that the Scriptures had been interpolated or corrupted, and the observation is equally applicable to all who add to, or reject, certain parts of the sacred canon—“According to your way of proceeding, the authority of Scripture is quite destroyed, and every one’s fancy is to determine what in the Scriptures is to be received, and what not. He does not admit it, because it is found in writings of so great credit and authority; but it is rightly written, because it is agreeable to his judgment. Into what confusion and uncertainty must men be brought by such a principle!”

It is a wonderful circumstance in the providence of God, that while the two parts of Scripture were delivered to two classes, with the fullest attestation of their Divine original, both the one and the other have been faithful in preserving the precious trust respectively committed to them, while they have both been rebellious in regard to that part of which they were not

originally appointed the depositaries. The Jews always held the books of the Old Testament in the highest veneration, and continued to preserve them, without addition or diminution, until the coming of Him concerning whom they testify, and they have kept them entire to this day ; yet they have altogether rejected the New Testament Scriptures. And while Christians have all agreed in preserving the Scriptures of the New Testament entire and uncorrupted, they have wickedly adulterated those of the Old by a spurious addition, or have retrenched certain portions of them. Of the Divine original of the sacred Scriptures, as we now possess them, we have evidence the most abundant and diversified. It is the distinguishing characteristic of the gospel, that it is preached to the poor, and God has so ordered it, that the authenticity of that Word by which all are to be judged, should not be presented to them as a matter of doubtful disputation.

Were there no other evidence of the truth of Divine revelation than the existence of the Holy Scriptures, that alone would be conclusive. The Bible is not a book compiled by a single author, or by many authors acting in confederacy in the same age, in which case it would not be so wonderful to find a just and close connexion in its several parts. It is the work of between thirty and forty writers in very different conditions of life ; kings, legislators, and statesmen were employed, with herdsmen and fishermen in the accomplishment of the work. They wrote also in distant ages ; and some of them in distant countries ; so that under these circumstances the world must have assumed an appearance altogether new, and men must have had different interests to pursue. This would have led a spirit of imposture to vary

its schemes, and to adapt them to different stations in the world, and to different fashions and changes in every age. David wrote about 400 years after Moses, and Isaiah about 250 after David, and John about 800 years after Isaiah. Yet these authors, with all the other Prophets and Apostles, wrote in perfect harmony, confirming the authority of their predecessors, labouring to enforce their instructions, and denouncing the severest judgments on all who continued disobedient. Such entire agreement in propounding religious truths and principles, different from any before or since promulgated, except by those who have learned from them, establishes the divine mission of the writers of the Bible beyond dispute, proving that they all derived their wisdom from God, and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In all the works of God there is an analogy characteristic of his Divine hand; and the variety and harmony that shine so conspicuously in the heavens and the earth, are not farther removed from the suspicion of imposture than the unity which, in the midst of boundless variety, reigns in that book which reveals the plan of redemption. To forge the Bible is as impossible as to forge a world.*

* So impressed was the celebrated Sir William Jones with the character of the Holy Scriptures, that, after having distinguished himself as the greatest linguist in the world, after having made himself acquainted with all the literature of the East and of the West, of ancient as well as modern times, he left the following remarkable testimony in an autograph note in his Bible:—"I have carefully and regularly perused these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that the volume, independently of its Divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written."

CHAPTER VI.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE Scriptures of the Old Testament and of the New, are not only genuine and authentic, but also inspired. The claim of inspiration which they advance, is a claim of infallibility and of perfection. It is also a claim of absolute authority, which demands unlimited submission. It is the claim of being the Book or WORD OF GOD, as being *dictated* by God.

The inspiration of the Scriptures is attested, both by the nature and value of their contents, and by the evidence of their truth. On these grounds, they stand without a rival in the world, and challenge from every man the highest possible regard.

Our knowledge of the inspiration as well as of every doctrine of the Bible, must be collected from itself. If the writers of this book appear with such credentials as entitle them to be received as commissioned of God, it is from themselves only we can learn those truths which they are authorized to make known. Among these, it is of primary importance to know what is the extent of that dependence which we are to place on their words. Is implicit credit to be given to every thing they declare? and, if the writers are numerous, is this equally due to all that they have written?

The question of the inspiration of the Scriptures has been viewed by many as one of great difficulty; and, accordingly, various theories have been invented to explain it. To those who consider the subject merely in the light of the Bible itself (the only source of legi-

timate information on any matter of revelation), it may appear surprising that this doctrine should be supposed to present any difficulty at all. Nothing can be more clearly, more expressly, or more precisely taught in the Word of God. And while other important doctrines may be met with passages of seeming opposition, there is not, in the language of the Scriptures, one expression that even appears to contradict their plenary or verbal inspiration. Whence, then, it may be asked, has arisen the idea of difficulty so general among the learned, but unknown to the great body of Christians? It has proceeded, wholly, from an unhallowed desire to penetrate into the manner of the Divine operation, on the mind of man, in the communication of revealed truth. That the Holy Ghost spake and wrote through men, is a fact attested by the Scriptures; but how he influenced their minds we are not informed. To enquire into the nature of the influence of the Spirit of God in inspiration, is as fruitless and presumptuous as to enquire into the nature of that influence which gives spiritual life and produces spiritual birth, or the nature of that influence by which the universe was created. With respect to the way in which the Holy Spirit acted on the writers of the Bible, we know nothing; but that every part of it is equally inspired, rests on Divine testimony.

Instead, however, of coming to the Scriptures in a childlike manner, and humbly submitting to what they teach on this subject, many have occupied themselves in forming a scale, for determining how far inspiration was necessary in their different parts, while to some parts they ascribe what they improperly call inspiration only in a very small degree. But as the Scriptures assert the inspiration of all their parts, these writers

are obliged to denominate even this slight assistance as a kind of inspiration. Some accordingly make three degrees or kinds of what they denominate inspiration, while others subjoin a fourth and a fifth, or even more. To the *superintendence*, *elevation*, and *suggestion* of Dr Doddridge, have been added *excitement*, *guidance*, and *control*. But will the term *inspiration* apply to any one of these varieties attributed to it, except *suggestion*? Does inspiration mean to superintend, to excite, or to control the mind? These are not kinds or degrees of inspiration; they are not inspiration in any view whatever. Had they all been enjoyed by the writers, it would not have entitled the Scriptures to be called the Word of God. Nor is it lawful to interpret what is said with respect to the writing, as if it respected merely the mind of the writers. Besides, the enquiry is not what degree of divine assistance might have been necessary for the Scriptures, but what is the divine testimony on the subject. Can any thing, then, be more improper than to speak of a number of different species of inspiration, in a graduated scale of increase, when the Scriptures themselves have not, in all their compass, a single sentence that teaches any distinction in their inspiration?

To such speculations, though very generally adopted, the writers of the Scriptures give not the slightest countenance or support. This being the fact, and as the question of inspiration can only be determined by the Scriptures themselves, all the distinctions that have been introduced are nothing better than vain and unsubstantial theories, unsupported by any evidence. "*All Scripture*," says Paul, "*is given by*

inspiration of God.”* This declaration is decisive on the subject. The Apostle thus expressly affirms, that every passage of Scripture is inspired by God; and what is here meant by inspiration belongs equally to every part of the Bible, since it cannot mean one thing respecting one part, and another respecting another part, for different meanings never belong to the same word in the same occurrence. This assertion is not confined to the Old Testament, but refers to the whole of the Scriptures. “The Holy Scriptures,” with which Timothy, in the preceding verse, is said to have been early acquainted, are the Scriptures of the Old Testament; but the phrase *all Scripture*, without the article, instead of being confined to the ancient Scriptures, embraces all that can be called Scripture. Even at that time Timothy must have known that the writings of the Apostles were called Scriptures. That they were so denominated in the Apostolic times, is clear from 2 Peter, iii. 16. “As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

The word *inspire* signifies to breath into, and literally corresponds to the original in 2 Tim. iii. 16, All scripture is *inspired by God*. It is here of the *writing* that the inspiration is asserted. While it is very proper to speak of the writers as inspired, it must be borne in mind that this passage speaks of inspiration

* Whoever wishes to see this passage fully examined, may read “A Critical Discussion on 2 Tim. iii. 16,” by Mr Carson, annexed to his “Refutation of Dr Henderson’s Doctrine in his late work on Divine Inspiration,” pp. 187. Hamilton, Adams, & Co, London; Wm. Whyte & Co., Edinburgh. 1837.

solely as it concerns what is *written*. Inspiration, then, is here ascribed to the Scriptures, and is not predicated of the writers. It is by overlooking this, and treating of inspiration as it respects the sacred writers, that false theories on the subject have originated. The greek compound word corresponding to our phrase *inspired by God*, was applied among the heathens to such dreams as were supposed to be breathed into men. Paul calls the Old Testament Scriptures “the ORACLES of God,” which were committed to the Jews.—Rom. iii. 2. He afterwards gives the same denomination of “oracles” to all the revealed truth of God.—Heb. v. 12. The same expression was used by the Greeks to denote the responses given out in distinct words, which their priests made, in name of their deities, to those who consulted them. In the same sense, Stephen, speaking under the immediate influence of the Holy Ghost, designates the writings of Moses as “lively oracles.” In this expression their *verbal* inspiration is distinctly asserted.

In the passage already quoted, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*,” the same thing is explicitly declared. Paul does not say the *meaning* of all Scripture, or the *ideas* contained in it, but all *Scripture*—all *writing*, or all that is *written* (taking Scripture in the appropriated sense in which he uses it), is given by inspiration of God. Here, then, we have a most unequivocal testimony to the inspiration of the *words* of Scripture, for neither a meaning, nor an idea, can be expressed in writing, except by words. If any writing is inspired, the words of necessity must be inspired, because the words are the writing; for what is a writing, but words written? The thoughts and sen-

timents are the meaning of the words. To say that a writing is inspired, while the *words* are uninspired, is a contradiction in terms. To the same purpose, the Apostle Peter affirms, “*The prophecy came not of old time [at any time] by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*” If they *spake* as they were *moved*, they did not choose the language they uttered, but the words which they spoke were given to them by the Holy Ghost.—1 Cor. ii. 13. In the same manner the disciples, on the day of Pentecost, “*were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*” Here, then, *utterance*, or the words they spoke, is expressly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Nothing can more distinctly convey the meaning of inspiration than these words, “*who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said.*”—Acts, iv. 25. And this inspiration, which without variation or exception is claimed for the Scriptures by the sacred writers, entitles the whole of them to be called “*the Word of God,*” to which high designation they could not be entitled on any other ground.

The words of Scripture, indeed, as used by the writers, were their own words. But this does not convey the idea that the Bible is partly the word of God, and partly the word of man. It is not the effect of any such co-operation, as supposes that one part was produced by God, and the other part by man, to make out a whole. The passages above quoted preclude our entertaining any such notion. Because the words were written by the Prophets and Apostles, this does not prevent them from being the words of God. The following remarks of President Edwards, when he is com-

bating the deeply erroneous sentiment of the Arminians, respecting a co-operation between God and man in the work of grace, will explain this matter. “In efficacious grace we are not merely passive, nor yet does God do some, and we do the rest. But God does all, and we do all. God produces all, and we act all. For that is what he produces, viz. our own acts. God is the only proper author and foundation : we only are the proper actors. We are, in different respects, wholly passive and wholly active. In the Scriptures the same things are represented as from God and from us. God is said to convert, and men are said to convert and turn. God makes a new heart, and we are commanded to make us a new heart. God circumcises the heart, and we are commanded to circumcise our own hearts ; not merely because we must use the means in order to the effect, but the effect itself is our act and our duty. These things are agreeable to that text, ‘ God worketh in you both to will and to do.’”—EDWARDS’S *Remarks*, &c. 251.

We are not, however, required to suppose, that while inspired, the ordinary exercise of the faculties of the penmen of the Scriptures was counteracted or suspended, or that their minds did not entirely go along with what was communicated to them. “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost,” Acts, xi. 4. They “had the mind of Christ,” 1 Cor. xi. 15 ; and were themselves cast into the mould of that doctrine which they delivered to others. We are certain, then, as appears from the whole of their writings, that, as far as they comprehended the truths which they were employed to record, they both fully acquiesced in them, and powerfully felt their force.

It forms no objection to the inspiration of the Scrip-

tures, that the words are occasionally changed in parallel passages or quotations by Him who dictated them. The Holy Spirit is not confined to any one mode of expression, and in such places his mind is conveyed in words, which though varied by him, are yet perfectly adapted to communicate his will. The objection to verbal inspiration from varieties of expression among the sacred writers, is altogether groundless. It is taking for granted, that two or more accounts of the same thing, differing in phraseology, though substantially agreeing, cannot all be the words of inspiration; which has not the smallest foundation in truth. If variety of expression in relating the same things in the Scriptures would not affect the truth of the narrative, on the supposition that the writers were uninspired, why is it presumed that it would affect it on the supposition of their being inspired? and why should it be thought improper for the Holy Ghost to make use of that variety? Why should a perfect identity of words be aimed at? Variations of expression, instead of being contradictions to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, are not in the smallest degree inconsistent with it. Are they consistent with truth? If they are, they are consistent with inspiration.

Nor does the difference of style which we find among these writers at all conclude against their having the words they were to write imparted to them. The style that God was pleased to employ was used, and to the instruments he chose that style was natural, and flowed like the words with their full consent, and according to the particular tone of their minds, while they yielded to the impression as voluntary and intelligent agents. The Holy Spirit could dictate to them

his own words in such a way, that they would also be their words, uttered with the understanding. He could speak the same thought by the mouth of a thousand persons, each in his own style. Is it, then, because we cannot comprehend the mode of such an operation, that we should dare to deny the obvious import of Scripture declarations? Because one peculiar cast of style distinguishes every man's writings, is it thought impossible that the Spirit of God can employ a variety of styles, or is it supposed that he must be confined to one particular style? The simple statement of such an idea contains its refutation. It is evident, too, that variety of style militates no more against the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, than against the idea of the writers being superintended, elevated, or controlled; for if the Holy Spirit *sanctioned* variety, it was equally consistent to *dictate* variety. And it might be shown that such variety is of essential importance in the Gospel narratives, in bringing out very interesting views, that could not be so well exhibited in a single narrative.

Of the fact, however, that the variety of style which is found among the writers of the Scriptures, does not in the smallest degree militate against that verbal inspiration by which they affirm that they are written, we have conclusive proof. For while it is evident to all, that there is a certain characteristic distinction of style, that pervades the whole of the Scriptures, and sufficiently attests that they are the work of the same author, it is equally certain that each one of the writers is distinguished from the rest by a style peculiar to himself. Now the difference of style is as great among the prophets, when predicting future events, which they did

not understand, where, *as is admitted by all, the words they employed must necessarily have been communicated to them*, as it is found to be among them when relating events with which they were previously acquainted. Here, then, we have positive proof on this subject, which it is impossible to set aside. The objection, too, that is founded on variety of style, to the communication of *words*, would equally conclude against the communication of *ideas*. *There is as great diversity of modes of thought, and of viewing their subjects, as of EXPRESSION AND STYLE among the writers of Scripture.* And can it for a moment be supposed, that either as to the one or the other the Spirit of God is limited? “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?” “Who hath made man’s mouth, or who maketh the dumb, or the deaf, or the seeing, or the blind; did not I, the Lord?” He who conferred on men all the varied forms and faculties which they possess, is he not able to communicate to their minds whatever seems to him good, in every possible variety and every conceivable shape? Is there any contradiction in the declaration, “Who by the mouth of thy servant David hath said?” If it be possible for the Almighty to utter his own words in the style and manner of expression of the writers whom he employs, the objection to the inspiration of the Scriptures from variety of expression or style, is altogether nugatory.

It has been objected, that if the verbal inspiration of the whole of the Scriptures could be proved, it would follow, that the words of all the speakers who are introduced in them, such as those of Job’s friends, although their opinions were erroneous, nay even the

words of the devil himself, were inspired. This objection is so absurd, that unless it had been sometimes gravely urged, it would be too trifling to be noticed. Is it not sufficiently plain, that while God dictated to the sacred penman the words of those referred to, he dictated them to be inserted not as *his* words, but as *their* words? Every thing contained in the Bible, whether the words of the penman, that contain the mind of God, or the words of others, that are inserted for the purpose of giving such information as he is pleased to impart, is equally, according to the express declarations of Scripture, *dictated* by God. It should, however, be observed, that it is not at all implied in the assertion of verbal inspiration, that every example recorded in Scripture, without any judgment expressed with regard to the conduct of good, or even inspired men, is held forth for imitation. When the Word of God records human conduct, without pronouncing on its morality, whether it is sin or duty must be ascertained by an appeal to the general principles of Scripture.

It is no valid objection to verbal inspiration, that the sacred writers were often acquainted beforehand with those facts which they recorded, and that they were directed to refer to this knowledge to establish their credibility. This no more proves that their relating these facts originated with themselves, than the previous knowledge of a messenger of the contents of the message he bears, proves that it originated with himself, or detracts from its truth or authority. The Scriptures are God's message to the world through the writers of Scripture; and they are equally a communication from God when these writers received

what they previously knew, and when they wrote things of which they were previously ignorant: their previous knowledge, or ignorance, is not at all to be taken into account. We have nothing to do with either. What they gave, they gave from God, and not from their previous knowledge. It required no inspiration to teach a man what he knew, but it required inspiration to write such an account of this as could be called the word of God, or be said to be written by inspiration. It has arisen entirely from viewing inspiration, as it respects the inspired persons, and not the things written by them, that it has appeared absurd to speak of inspiration with respect to what was known by natural means, and that could have been written without inspiration. To avoid this, some have denied inspiration with respect to certain things recorded in the Scriptures, while others, with more reverence for them, have contrived such distinctions in the word as to suit the various cases. But not even the appearance of a difficulty on this point presents itself when the question is properly stated. It is not said that the sacred writers were inspired with knowledge which they previously possessed; but it is said that their accounts of every thing recorded by them are given by inspiration; and this is as true with respect to things previously known by them, as it is with respect to those things of which they were previously ignorant. When they wrote what they knew, and could of themselves have expressed it, both the matter and the words were the words of God, as much as when they wrote what they did not understand. There was no need to be inspired with the knowledge of what they knew, but every thing written in the

account of this was by inspiration; and though they might have related many things in their own language, without the dictation of God, yet, as a matter of fact, they did not write any thing without Him, for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.

Some have supposed that the quotations in the New Testament from the Septuagint, which was not inspired, concludes against the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. On this it has been observed, that there is not in all the New Testament any thing that recognises the translation of the LXX. Even those passages in which there is a perfect coincidence between the words of the New Testament, and the Greek translation of the Old, are not alleged as quotations from that translation. If they were adopted, they were adopted by the Holy Spirit, and are to the writers of Scripture as fully the words of inspiration as any thing contained in the Bible. Why should not the Holy Spirit use that translation as far as it expressed his meaning? Such passages were not verbally inspired in the translation; but when communicated by the Holy Spirit to the writers of the New Testament, they are as fully inspired as the letters of Jesus to the Seven Churches of Asia.

The existence of various readings has been urged as an objection to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures; but it has nothing to do with the question. The doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration does not imply that our copies must infallibly contain the pure original in every instance. It asserts that the Scriptures as God gave them were his, not only in matter, but in every word of them. But this by no means implies that the present copies are in every instance perfectly corres-

pondent with the original. The permanency of the purity of the divine word was committed by God to the care of his Providence, in the use of the ordinary means. There is, indeed, every reason *a priori*, to conclude that God would not suffer his Word to be corrupted; and there is the most satisfactory evidence that he has not permitted it to be so. But the doctrine of verbal inspiration has nothing to do with this, whatever might be the extent of corruption by transcribers.

Inspiration belongs to the original writings. No one contends for any degree of inspiration in the translations of the Scriptures that have been made in different ages. Accuracy in them is, under the providence of God, by which he always attains his purposes, secured by the fidelity of those to whom the Scriptures have been committed—by the opposition of parties watching each other, as of Jews and Christians, and of various sects—and by the great multiplication of copies and translations into different languages which so early took place.

There is a simplicity, a harmony, and a consistency, in that plan which represents the Scriptures, as in one point of view, the production of man, and in another wholly the book of God. This is consistent with the language of the Apostle Paul, when he sometimes designates the Gospel, “my Gospel,” and sometimes “the Gospel of God,” it being, in fact, both the one and the other. Though the wisdom of man could never have anticipated such a scheme of inspiration, yet, when it is submitted to the mind, it manifests itself to be Divine. And nothing but this view will harmonize all the assertions of Scripture.

The subject of the inspiration of the Bible has been too much disregarded among Christians; many have not attended to it at all, while others have ventured to indulge in vain speculations respecting it. But, like every other doctrine, it ought to be carefully enquired into, and the truth respecting it received with the most unreserved submission. It is a matter *purely of divine testimony*, and our business is simply to receive the testimony. Inspiration is as much a matter of revelation as justification by faith. Both stand equally on the authority of the Scriptures, which are as much an ultimate authority on this subject as on any other question of revealed truth. We have nothing to do respecting it with any thing except the Divine testimony; and from it a body of evidence may be produced that no revealed truth can exceed. It will be proper, then, to consider it solely in the light which the Word of God affords; and for this purpose, after attending to the objections that have been derived from erroneous views of the meaning of certain passages of Scripture, to exhibit the ample proofs contained in the sacred record, which unequivocally substantiate its own plenary inspiration in every part, without one single exception.

The inspiration of certain parts of the Scriptures is frequently denied, on the supposition that the Apostles themselves “sometimes candidly admit, that they are not speaking by inspiration.” This objection proceeds on a mistaken view of the meaning of the passages on which it is founded.

In the 7th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul is supposed, in some places, to disclaim inspiration, and, in one place, not to be certain whether he is inspired or not. This, at first sight, will

appear to be evidently contrary to the uniform style of this Apostle's writings, and altogether improbable, when, as a commissioned and accredited ambassador of Jesus Christ, he is answering certain questions put to him by a Christian church, to whom he had just before in the most explicit manner asserted, that he spoke "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;" and that he was addressing them "in the name of the Lord Jesus."—1 Cor. ii. 13, and v. 4. Attention to these things might have prevented the adoption of the unfounded and mistaken meaning that has been affixed to the passages referred to, which tends to unsettle the minds of Christians respecting the inspiration of the Scriptures. No such indecision, however, attaches to the passages in question.

In answer to the question about marriage, Paul says, 1 Cor. vii. 6, "*I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.*" Does this mean, that the Spirit permitted him, but did not command him to give the answer he had done? Even upon this supposition, the Apostle's declaration must be according to the mind of the Spirit; for Paul could not, on such an occasion, have been permitted to say what was contrary to it. But this would have been a very extraordinary and unusual mode of communicating that mind, and evidently is not what is here intended. The obvious meaning is, that what the Apostle here said was in the way of permission, not of commandment. "I speak this," says he, "as a permission, and not as a commandment;" and without this, the Apostle might have been understood as enjoining marriage as an indispensable duty. In the second Epistle to the same church,

chap. viii. 8, the Apostle expresses himself to the same purpose, in a passage which no one misunderstands. Again, at the 10th verse,—“*Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord.*” This commandment had been delivered by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. The Apostle, therefore had no new commandment to deliver to them, or no commandment from himself only, but one which the Lord had given. “*To the rest, speak I, not the Lord.*” There was no former commandment given by the Lord, to which he might here refer them; on this point, therefore, he now delivers to them the will of God. So far, indeed, was this commandment from having been given before, that it was the repeal of an old one, by which, under the Jewish dispensation, the people were commanded to put away their wives, if heathens. Can it, then, be supposed, that the Apostle is speaking from himself, and not under the dictation of the Holy Ghost, when he is declaring the abrogation of a part of the law of God?

“*Now, concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.*” Here again no commandment had formerly been given, to which Paul could refer those to whom he wrote. But now, he gave his judgment as one that had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful in the discharge of that ministry which he had received, to deliver the whole counsel of God to man. “*I think also that I have the spirit of God*” In this, as in many other passages, the word translated, “I think,”* does not

* “On I Cor. vii. 40, *Wolfius* remarks, that the v. *δοκω* im-

mean doubting, but certainty. If Paul meant it to be understood, that he was not certain whether he was inspired or not, it would contradict all he has so often positively declared, in the same Epistle, on the subject of his inspiration, both before the expression in question and afterwards, when he says, chap. xiv. 37, “ If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that *the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*” And it would stand directly opposed to what he affirms, 1 Thess. iv. 8, “ He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.” But so far is this from being the case, that in order more deeply to impress the minds of those to whom he wrote, with the importance of what he had said, Paul concludes by assuring them that he was *certain* that he wrote by the Spirit of God.

The only other passage in which this Apostle is supposed to disclaim inspiration, occurs in 2 Cor. xi. 17 :— “ *That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.*” In this passage Paul does not refer to the authority, but to the example of the Lord. “ I speak not according to the example or manner of the Lord, but after the manner of fools :” a manner which, as he tells the Corinthians in the next chapter, they had compelled him to adopt. Such is the true sense of the above passages; but even if the mistaken meaning that is so

ports not an uncertain opinion, but conviction and knowledge, as John, v. 39. So in *Xenophon*, Cyroped., at the end of the proem, Ἡσθησθαι ΔΟΚΟΥΜΕΝ expresses *assurance*, not doubt.”—PARKHURST.

often attributed to them were the just one, they would not at all militate against the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, because in that case Paul must be viewed as having been inspired to write precisely as he has done, since they form a part of Scripture, *all of which is given by inspiration of God.*

Another passage in the Second Epistle of Peter, i. 19, is frequently quoted, so as to invalidate the Apostolic testimony. Peter had just before declared, that on the mount of transfiguration, he and the other Apostles had been eye-witnesses of the majesty of Jesus Christ, and had heard the voice from heaven, which attested that he was the beloved Son of God. Yet, after this, he is supposed to refer Christians to the word of prophecy, as "more sure" than this testimony. Instead of this, which is evidently a most improper view of the passage, degrading to the testimony of the Apostles (than which there is nothing in heaven, or on earth, more absolutely certain,) he refers to the prophecies, now made "more firm," or "confirmed," by what they had witnessed. *

Two passages are quoted from Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, v. 23, "*Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities.*" And 2 Tim. iv. 13, "*The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parch-*

* "He," the Apostle, "does not oppose," says *Wetstein*, "the prophetic word to fables, or to the transfiguration seen by himself. . . . But the prophetic word is *more firm* now, as it has been confirmed by the event, than it was before the event. So the Greek interpreters understood the passage."—*PARKHURST.*

ments." These passages, it is supposed, are of so unimportant a nature, that they cannot be the dictates of inspiration. Such a conclusion, even if we could not discover their use, would be altogether unwarrantable. On the same principle we might reject many other parts of Scripture, the import of which we do not understand; but in doing so, we should act both as absurdly and irreverently as the daring infidel, who might assert that a worm or a mushroom was not the workmanship of God, because it appeared to him insignificant; or that the whole world was not created by God, because it contained deserts and barren wastes, the use of which he could not comprehend.

In reference to the above passages, Dr Doddridge makes the following remarks: "There are *other objections* of a quite different class, with which I have no concern; because they affect only *such a degree of inspiration* as I think it *not prudent*, and I am sure it is *not necessary*, to assert. I leave them, therefore, to be *answered by those*, if any such there be, who imagine that *Paul* would need an *immediate Revelation* from Heaven, and a miraculous dictate of the *Holy Ghost*, to remind *Timothy of the cloak and writings which he left at Troas*, or to advise him to *mingle a little wine with his water*." * Modern writers on inspiration have likewise singled out these two passages, together with the shipwreck of Paul on the island of Melita, as uninspired, because they conceive that "these were not things of a religious nature."

Respecting the account of the Apostle's shipwreck, there are few things to be found in the historical part

* Dissertation on the Inspiration of the New Testament, in Appendix to the Harmony of the Evangelists, p. 58.

of the Bible that are more truly valuable, whether we consider the delightful and encouraging views it affords of the providential dealings of the Lord in every circumstance of the life of his people, or attend to the unparalleled illustration it furnishes of the manner by which the purposes of God are, in the use of means, carried into effect. Nothing could be more worthy of inspiration than the recording of this portion of Scripture; and so far from not being of a religious nature, the account it contains is fraught with the most important religious instruction. As to the objection that is founded on the two passages in the Epistles to Timothy, it being both commonly made and resorted to as one of the *strongholds* of those who oppose the verbal inspiration of the whole Scripture, it requires to be examined at some length. Instead of being so trifling as to render them unworthy to be a part of Divine Revelation, they present considerations of very high interest.

In the first of these passages, it is said, "*Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities.*" A due consideration of the nature of the office of Paul, who gave this injunction to Timothy, and of the Epistle in which it is contained, as a part of the oracles of God, as well as of the service in which Timothy was engaged, ought to have deterred any one from rashly concluding that this verse forms no part of the words of inspiration. The connexion, too, in which it is found, embodied in one of the most solemn addresses to be met with in the Scriptures, assures us that it must contain something of importance. "*I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before*

another, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid." Can it be imagined that, in the midst of an address, in which, if the language of inspiration is to be found in the Bible, the Apostle is speaking by it, before the charge is completed, which contains a permanent law in the kingdom of Christ, the course of that inspiration is suddenly interrupted, and broken in upon, by a remark merely human, "not of a religious nature," by an advice, which, originating with the Apostle, might not be judicious? On the contrary, being fully assured that the verse in question is, like the other parts of the charge that precede and follow it, dictated by the Divine Spirit, we are prepared to regard it as containing what is worthy of its author, and deserving of our attention. Proceeding, then, to examine it, under the settled conviction that it is given by inspiration of God, and that it is profitable for instruction in righteousness, I observe, That while enjoining upon Timothy many arduous and laborious duties, the Apostle was inspired to admonish him to attend to his health, in order to fit him for their right discharge; and hence Timothy was taught, and we learn, that it is the duty of every man to have a regard for his health, even amidst the most important labours, in order that he may be more fitted for the service of God, and that his life may be prolonged in that service.

2. We learn the abstemiousness of Timothy, notwithstanding his bodily weakness, and abundant labours.

3. That his abstemiousness was even carried the length of an unnecessary austerity, and that although he had a good end in view, this over-abstemiousness was wrong, and was therefore corrected by the Apostle. Hence, we learn how apt we are to err, even when our intentions are good, and how necessary it is to receive direction from the Lord.

4. If Timothy was in an error respecting the lawfulness of using wine, that error is here corrected; but whether this was the case or not, it was a matter of importance to instruct believers on this point, on which, as it appears from Rom. xiv. 21, a diversity of opinion existed in the churches. The lawfulness of the use of wine was denied by the Essenes, a sect among the Jews, as was afterwards the case with different Christian sects. This error may have been imbibed by them, or confirmed by the law of the Nazarites, or from a partial attention to the manner in which the Rechabites, who abstained from wine, were held up as an example of obedience to the people of Israel. In this view of the passage, it contains a most salutary and necessary corrective of what might otherwise have become extensively prejudicial in the kingdom of Christ; and it proves a useful comment, in the way of warning, on what the Apostle had said a little before, concerning a defection that was to take place in the latter times, in which false teachers were to command men to abstain from meats which God had created, to be received with thanksgiving, chap. iv. 3.

5. "Use a little wine." Here we are instructed in

the duty of temperance. We are taught to use the bounties of Providence with moderation, and in subordination to our sustenance and bodily health.

6. If the error of those who live too abstemiously, so as to hurt their health, be here corrected ; how much more does this passage condemn those who exceed in a contrary extreme, and who impair their constitutions by intemperance !

7. From this passage, as from some others, *e. g.* Phil. ii. 27, we learn that the Apostles had it not in their power on every occasion, even when they might be desirous of it, to work miraculous cures, and that the gift of healing, at that time vouchsafed, did not preclude the use of means for the preservation of health.

8. This passage sanctions the medical profession. This is very important, as some Christians have been inclined to think, that to have recourse to a physician is to supersede the interposition of God. Now, the prescription of Paul to Timothy was a medical prescription, founded on the fitness of the medicinal qualities of wine. Christians ought, indeed, to look to God for their cure, so ought they for the nourishment of their bodies, for man does not live by bread alone ; but both food and *medicine* are to be taken as the means appointed by God, as we here learn.

The other passage referred to, occurs in Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, ch. iv. 13, "*The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.*" This passage, like the former, is introduced in the midst of very solemn considerations, in connexion with an annunciation of the Apostle Paul's trial for his life, and in the immediate prospect of his martyr-

dom. In his desire to have his cloak brought to him from a distance, a proof is recorded at the close of his ministry, of Paul's disinterestedness in his labours among the churches. We are here reminded of his resolution, and are taught how faithfully he adhered to it, to make the gospel of God without charge; and in the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, not to abuse his power of receiving support in preaching the Gospel, or to allow his glorying on the ground of his disinterestedness to be made void, 1 Cor. ix. 13-18. On the approach of winter, in a cold prison, and at the termination of his course, the Apostle Paul appears here to be a follower indeed of him who had not where to lay his head. He is presented to our view as actually enduring those hardships, which elsewhere he describes in a manner so affecting,—“in prisons, in cold, in nakedness.” He had abandoned, as he elsewhere informs us, all the fair prospects that once opened to him of worldly advantages, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and had suffered the loss of all things: and in this Epistle we see all that he has said on the subject, embodied and verified. He is about to suffer death for the testimony of Jesus; and now he requests one of the few friends that still adhered to him (all the others, as he tells us, having forsaken him), to do his diligence to come before winter, and to bring to him his cloak. Here, in his solemn farewell address, of which the verse before us forms a part,—the last of his writings, and which contains a passage of unrivalled grandeur,—the Apostle of the Gentiles is exhibited in a situation calculated deeply to affect us. We behold him standing upon the confines of the two worlds,—in this world about to be beheaded, as guilty, by the Em-

peror of Rome,—in the other world to be crowned, as righteous, by the King of Kings,—here deserted by men, there to be welcomed by angels,—here in want of a cloak to cover him, there to be clothed upon with his house from heaven.

Dr Doddridge, in his commentary on the passage before us, has the following note:—“*Bring with thee that cloak.* If *φελωνην* here signifies *cloak*, or *mantle*, it is, as *Grotius* justly observes, a proof of *Paul's* poverty, that he had occasion to send so far for such a garment, which probably was not quite a new one.” Since, as we here learn, this observation of *Grotius* appeared just to Dr Doddridge, it might have prevented him from rashly treating the subject with the levity which appears in his remark, formerly quoted, and from *thinking* it not “prudent” to assert, that the text was dictated by the Holy Spirit. The observation of *Grotius* to which he refers, is as follows: “See the poverty of so great an Apostle, who considered so small a matter, left at such a distance, to be a loss to him!” On the same place, *Erasmus* remarks: “Behold the Apostle’s household furniture, a cloak to defend him from rain, and a few books!” Here, then, we are reminded incidentally (a manner of instruction common in the Word of God), of *Paul's* poverty. In the low, distressed circumstances of the Apostles, we see the Lord’s warnings, as to the reception they were to meet with from the world, and the hardships and privations they were to experience, fully verified. The evidence of the truth of the Gospel, which arises from the suffering condition of those who were first employed to propagate it, is calculated to produce on our minds the strongest conviction of its Divine origin. In the wisdom of

God it appears to have been appointed for this end; and it is all along kept in view, in the accounts transmitted in the Scriptures concerning them. “ I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed unto death ; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.—Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place.” 1 Cor. iv. 9-11.

Paul also desires Timothy to bring with him the “ books, but especially the parchments.” Whatever these parchments were, the use that Paul intended to make of them would be well known to Timothy, and in it he might have a farther example of the Apostle’s zeal, and unwearied exertion in the service of God. By this passage we may be taught, that even those who were so highly favoured with the most distinguished gifts, were not raised above the necessity of using means for their own improvement, and for the stirring up of those gifts that were in them ; and if this was the case respecting them, how forcibly is the duty here inculcated upon us, to give diligence to retain the knowledge of Divine things which we may already possess, and to seek to add to our present attainments, whatever we may suppose them to be ! We are certain that they were not useless books which the Apostle required to be brought to him at such a time, and from so great a distance. They must have been intended to be profitable to himself, or in some way to be turned to the advancement of that cause, to promote which was his only desire, and for which he was now about to suffer. In any, or all of these views, the contents of this verse may convey instruction, and afford an ex-

ample to us ; and at any rate, we can no more conceive that the course of inspiration is here interrupted, without the smallest intimation to this effect (of which an example in the whole Bible cannot be produced), than we can believe it was the case concerning the verse which we formerly considered.

In the former of the above passages, we observe Paul evincing his kindness and sympathy, and attending to the wants of a fellow labourer ; in the latter, to his own wants. Is there any thing in either of them beneath the dignity of Divine Revelation ? In prescribing by his Apostle, the use of wine, which he would bless for the re-establishment of the health of Timothy, the Lord acted in the same manner as when he directed his prophet to order the application of a " lump of figs," for the cure of King Hezekiah. Was it beneath the dignity of Him who turned water into wine at a marriage feast, to order the use of wine for the preservation of Timothy's health, instead of the use of water ? Was this unworthy of that Lord who had condescended so far to the indulgence of the feelings of his people, as to cause it to be engrossed in his law, that the man who had planted a vineyard, and had not eaten of it, should not go out to war, lest he should die in the battle ? Deut. xx. 6.

So far from there being any thing in these passages beneath the dignity of a revelation from God, or unworthy of his character, they are entirely consistent with the one, and strikingly illustrative of the other. And it is only when we consider them, not as the word of man, but as "*the word of God*," that we discover their beauty and their use. It is God himself who here speaks. He who is the high and lofty One that

inhabiteth eternity, condescends to the weakness and to the wants of his servants. Nothing that interests them escapes his notice. The hairs of their head are all numbered, and the smallest circumstance of their lot is ordered by the providence of God. What a striking illustration do these two passages afford, of those affecting considerations which Jesus presented to his disciples, Luke, xii. 22-30, in order to withdraw their minds from the cares and anxieties to which they are so prone to yield during their earthly pilgrimage! Viewing these verses in this light, as *the words of God himself*; can any thing be more adapted to foster the spirit of adoption, or to lead us to cry, Abba, Father? And are they to be expunged from the Sacred Record, as incompatible with the idea we ought to form of inspiration, and unworthy of proceeding from God? But at such passages as these the blind infidel scoffs, while the injudicious or ill-instructed Christian considers them as useless, and converts them into an argument against the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

On the same principle that the admonition to Timothy, to drink no longer water, but to use a little wine for the benefit of his health, is rejected as unworthy of verbal inspiration, ought not the truth of the miracle wrought at the marriage at Cana in Galilee, of turning water into wine, to be denied, and the occasion deemed unworthy of miraculous interposition; and especially of its being exhibited as the first of the miracles of Jesus? Shall we be told that *it* also was a “thing not of a religious nature,” that it was not worthy to be recorded by the pen of inspiration, that it is not “*prudent*” to speak of such a passage as inspired; or to admit with those, “*if any such there be, who imagine*”

that Jesus first manifested forth his glory, by turning a little water into wine ?

The levity, not to say the profaneness, of this manner of treating the Holy Scriptures, ought to be held in abhorrence. Their paramount authority, and their unity as the Word of God, are thus set aside. The Bible is converted into another book ; and a new revelation, were such licentious principles of interpretation admitted, would become indispensable to teach the humble Christian, who takes it for “ a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path,” what portion of it he is to consider as from God, and what portion as from man, what parts of it are of “ a religious nature,” from which he may derive edification, and in which he may converse with God, and what parts relate only to “ common or civil affairs,” with which he has no concern, and respecting which it would not be *prudent* to speak of them as inspired. If, in this manner, inspiration is first denied to the words, and next to such things as are supposed not to be “ of a religious nature,” the progress to the non-inspiration of whole books of Scripture, is perfectly easy and natural ; and, if whole books are rejected, then, both the authenticity and inspiration of the whole of the Scriptures are subverted. For, if the canon has admitted one uninspired book, there is no security that it has not admitted more ; and if that canon has been recognised by Jesus Christ with one uninspired book, every book in the collection may be uninspired, notwithstanding that recognition. If the Apostle Paul has asserted the inspiration of the whole volume, while one book is uninspired, no book in the volume can be received on his authority. The discovery, in like manner, of one single passage in the Scriptures

not dictated by the Holy Ghost, would make void the declaration, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and would render inspiration necessary to tell us what part of it is inspired, and what is not. According to those writers who deny the doctrine of plenary inspiration, we have not the pure Word of God; for much that we have under that designation, is solely the word of man.

Let those who treat the Scriptures in this manner pause, and review the principles on which they are proceeding; and let them not perplex "plain Christians" with their rash and unhallowed speculations. The great body of believers receive, with implicit credence, the whole contents of the Bible, as the oracles of God; they venture not either to add to it, or to take from it. Convinced that it is the book of God, they treat even those parts of it which they do not understand with humble reverence; and in them is fulfilled what is written, Matth. xi. 25, while the fancied wisdom and knowledge of many learned critics has perverted them. Isaiah, xlvi. 10. Those who, in the spirit of little children, read in the Epistles of Paul to Timothy, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," will not easily be induced to believe, that in the very same Epistles the Apostle has contradicted his own declaration, and has afforded at least two examples of the fallacy and unsoundness of what he had, almost in the same breath, so solemnly affirmed. And *it is upon the general ground of these passages being found in Scripture, independently of the meaning which may be affixed to them*, that we denounce the profane manner in which they have been treated, and hold them to be a portion of the Word of God. It was in this light

that Origen, who was born towards the end of the second century, viewed those parts of Scripture as inspired, of which he was not able to discover the use. The following are his words when quoting Mark, x. 50 : “ Shall we say that the Evangelist wrote without thought, when he related the man’s casting away his garment, and leaping and coming to Jesus ? and shall we dare to say that these things were inserted in the Gospels in vain ? For my part, I believe that not one jot or tittle of the Divine instruction is in vain. We are never to say that there is any thing impertinent or superfluous in the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit, though to some they may seem obscure. But we are to turn the eyes of our mind to Him who commanded these things to be written, and seek of Him the interpretation of them. The sacred Scriptures come from the fulness of the Spirit ; so that there is nothing in the Prophets, or the Law, or the Gospel, or the Apostles, which descends not from the fulness of the Divine Majesty.” “ Well knowing,” says Irenæus, “ that the Scriptures are perfect, as dictated by the Word of God and his Spirit—a heavy punishment awaits those who add to, or take from, the Scriptures.”

The inspiration of the account of Paul’s shipwreck, and that of Paul in writing for his cloak, stand upon the same foundation as the inspiration of any doctrine in the plan of salvation. But, to be able to show that these facts contain religious instruction, is not necessary for the vindication of their inspiration. That they are inspired, is ascertained by their being found in a book that is divinely attested as inspired. We ought not to read in order to discriminate in the Scriptures by a human theory what is divine from what is human, but to

read every word as the dictate of God, and endeavour to find out the religious use the Holy Spirit intended we should derive from it. Admitting that in some things we should not be successful, whether is it more proper to reject those as not given by the inspiration of God, or to suppose that the Divine Word may contain treasures that we are not able perfectly to exhaust? "If," says Mr Scott, "we could not understand, or get any benefit from certain portions of the Scriptures, it would be more reasonable to blame our own dulness, than so much as in thought, to censure them as useless." It should, moreover, be remembered that to entitle the simplest narrative to be called Scripture, requires as much inspiration as any thing contained in Scripture.

Some who are satisfied as to the inspiration of all the other parts of the New Testament Scriptures, are doubtful concerning the inspiration of the three books written by Mark and Luke, who were not Apostles. From early accounts concerning these disciples, it is reckoned by many that they were among the seventy whom Jesus sent out in Judea. We know for certain, that they respectively accompanied Peter and Paul in their journeys, and they are mentioned by these two Apostles with much regard. The Apostles not only received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, but by laying on their hands imparted these gifts to other disciples. When Peter went down to Samaria, he laid his hands on the disciples there, who then received the Holy Ghost. When Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome, he informed them that he longed to see them, that he might impart to them some spiritual gift. Paul had communicated a gift to Timothy, whom he employed, as he also did Titus, in directing the churches in

his absence. "*I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands.*" By means of these gifts, those who possessed them were enabled to speak in languages they had never learned, and some of them to speak, by "revelation," the mind of God. There can be no reason, then, to doubt, that to Mark and Luke, considering the circumstances in which they stood with the Apostles, the best miraculous gifts were also communicated. They were not Apostles, but they were prophets who received immediate revelations from the Spirit. Eph. iii. 5.

But the conclusive argument as to the inspiration and fitness of these two disciples to contribute the books they have furnished to the sacred volume, does not rest on any supposition respecting them, however good the grounds of it may be, but on the fact, that the books they wrote are a part of those Scriptures of which it is said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and that the first churches, *under the immediate guidance and superintendence of the Apostles*, received these books on an equal footing with the other Scriptures. The nation of Israel was appointed by God himself to be the depositaries of the Old Testament Scriptures, which are stamped with the authority of Jesus Christ. In like manner, to that nation which constitutes the kingdom of heaven, the New Testament Scriptures were committed. To it they were addressed and delivered by the Apostles, whom Christ had commissioned to record his words, which these Scriptures contain. The inspiration, therefore, of this second portion of the Holy Scriptures, stands on the same footing with that of the first por-

tion, and is equally stamped with his authority. We appeal to the canon of the Jews with respect to the Old Testament, and we have the same strong ground of confidence, when we receive from the first churches the Scriptures of the New Testament. As, therefore, the Gospels of Mark and Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles, were received by them without dispute, were read by them in their assemblies every Lord's day, and taken for the rule of their duty, as of equal authority with the other Scriptures, which we have already seen by quotations from the early Christian writers ; so we conclude with certainty, that these books stand on the same footing in point of authority, in other words, of inspiration, with all the rest, and form a part of the words of Christ, by which we shall be judged at the last day.

It is often supposed that the historical parts of Scripture were written by men acquainted with the facts that are recorded, under a Divine *superintendence*, by which they were prevented from falling into any error. This opinion is founded on very low and most erroneous ideas of those portions of the Word of God, and of their use. It supposes that those histories are little more than the narrative of the facts they contain, in which we are not greatly concerned. But every fact they record is fraught with important instruction. This idea was so strongly impressed upon the Jews, that they maintained that God had more care of the letters and syllables of the Law, than of the stars of heaven ; and that upon each tittle of it, whole mountains of doctrine hung. Hence every individual letter of the Law was numbered by them, and notice was taken how often it occurred. The facts of the Scripture history

teach the character of God, and the character of man. They are the history of God's providence and ways, and all of them refer to the work of the Messiah.

In the tenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the essential importance of the historical parts of the Old Testament Scriptures is placed beyond all doubt. After referring to the recorded history of Israel, concerning their passage through the Red Sea, and the manner in which they were conducted in the wilderness, the Apostle adds, "*Now all these things happened to them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*" Here the purpose and value of the historical parts of Scripture are demonstrated. They are intended for the *admonition* of the people of God. " *whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*"—Rom. xv. 4. In this text it is expressly affirmed, that every part of the Old Testament Scriptures was written for the use and edification of believers. Where, then, is there place for the impious sentiment which some have ventured to promulgate, so derogatory to every idea that we ought to entertain of the oracles of God, so diametrically opposed to all they inculcate respecting their own Divine origin and inspiration, that they contain certain things that are "not of a religious nature," and that "no inspiration was necessary concerning them?" In opposition to such daring and profane theories, Paul, the commissioned and accredited ambassador of Jesus Christ affirms that "*ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteous-*

ness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The above comprehensive declarations include the historical as well as the prophetic and doctrinal parts of the Sacred Oracles, in short, the whole of them.

When the typical import of so many of the sacred narratives, concerning persons, places, institutions, and events, with their necessary bearings, in subserviency to the ushering in of the Messiah, are duly attended to, all may be convinced, that for selecting and relating these histories, in which nothing was to be deficient, and nothing redundant, and for placing before us these mystic pictures for our instruction, the most plenary inspiration, the most accurate divine dictation, was indispensable. The prophets, and even the angels, had but a partial understanding of the things that were afterwards to take place. Moses, it is evident, was not aware, that, as being a type of Christ, it was necessary that his death should intervene, before the people of Israel should be led into the promised land. We have no reason to believe that he understood the import of all he wrote; for instance, that when he recorded the history of Sarah and Hagar, he knew the design for which it was recorded, and the use that was afterwards to be made of it. We cannot doubt that the prayer of David, "*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law,*" was equally suitable for Moses, who wrote that law. It was *the Lord* who made the statutes, and judgments, and laws, between him and the children of Israel, *by the hand of Moses*. —Lev. xxvi. 46.

Had the wisest and best informed of the Scripture historians not been inspired of God, but simply super-

intended, so as to prevent them from falling into error, the histories recorded by them would have been very unlike those which they have actually transmitted. Many of their narrations that exist would never have appeared, and others of them would have been very differently modified. We might have discovered in them the self-approving wisdom of man, but not the seeming "foolishness of God." Would the united sagacity of all the wise men in the world have led them to relate the history of the creation of the universe in one chapter of his book, as Moses has done, and of the erection of the tabernacle in thirteen? * Would the fond prejudices of the Jewish nation, or the general desire, fostered by so many of the learned, to support what is called the dignity of human nature, in both which Moses no doubt participated, have permitted him to record so base an action as the selling of their

* If we compare the first chapter of Genesis with the last sixteen of Exodus, excepting the thirty-second and the two following, we shall find a great difference between Moses' describing the construction of the universe and that of the tabernacle. In the one, he is very general and succinct; in the other, he is very copious, and marks the smallest peculiarities. The description of the great edifice of the world seemed truly to require more words than that of a small tent. But, on the contrary, the Spirit of God having presented a short representation of the whole mass of the world, details at great length the structure of the tabernacle. The world was solely constructed for the Church, in order that in it God should be served, and by it his glory manifested, Eph. iii. 10. The tabernacle was, in one view, a figure of the Church. God, thus purposing to show that his church, in which he was to be served, was more precious to him and more important, than all the rest of the world, has spoken of the tabernacle more amply and more particularly than of all the elements and all the universe together.

brother Joseph as a slave by the Jewish patriarchs, the incest of Judah, whose tribe was to be always pre-eminent, and the treachery and revenge of Levi, from whom was to descend the whole priesthood of Israel?

That there was a higher hand which directed the pens of Moses, and of the other writers of sacred history, may be sufficiently manifest to all who have seen in what that history has issued. There is, besides, a combination and a harmony in the historical parts, both of the Old and New Testaments, which we have sufficient ground to believe in a great measure escaped the notice of the writers, as has also been the case with thousands of those who have read them; a variety and a unity which irresistibly prove that *One* only. He who knows the end from the beginning is the author of the whole, who employed various individuals to produce a uniform work, of which none of them either comprehended all that he contributed to it, or knew for what reason he was directed to record one thing,* and to omit another.

Considering the purpose which the historical parts of the Scriptures were intended to serve, in exhibiting the character and power of God, and his uninterrupted agency in the government of the world, and in point-

* A remarkable instance of this occurs in the repetition of the tenth commandment in the book of Deuteronomy. The Romanists are in the habit of striking out the second commandment, which condemns their idolatry; and, to preserve the appearance of integrity for the decalogue, they divide the tenth commandment into two. The transposition of the two first clauses of this commandment in the book of Deuteronomy, for which at first sight no reason can be assigned, completely stultifies and exposes their artifice.

ing to him who is the end of the law, we have sufficient reason to be convinced, that neither Moses, nor the other sacred historians, nor all the angels in heaven, though acquainted with all the facts, and under the direction, and with the aid, both of superintendence and elevation, were competent to write the historical parts of the Word of God. They neither possessed foresight nor wisdom sufficient for the work. In both respects every creature is limited. Into these things, the angels, so far from being qualified to select and indite them, "desire to look," and, from the contemplation of them, derive more knowledge of God than they before possessed, and have their joy even in heaven increased. In those histories, the thoughts and secret motives of men are often unfolded and referred to. Was any one but the Searcher of Hearts competent to this? Could angels have revealed them, unless distinctly made known to them? If it be replied, that in such places the sacred writers enjoyed the inspiration of suggestion, that is, of verbal dictation, we ask, where is the distinction to be found? It is a distinction unknown to the Scriptures. And so far from a plenary inspiration not being necessary in its historical parts, there is not any portion of the sacred volume in which it is more indispensable. But even admitting that verbal inspiration was not in our view essential in those parts of the book of God, is this a reason why we should not receive the testimony of the sacred writers, who nowhere give the most distant hint that they are written under a different kind or degree of inspiration from the rest of it; but who, in the most unqualified manner, assert that full inspiration belongs to the whole of the Scriptures?

The words that are used in the prophetic parts of Scripture, must *necessarily* have been communicated to the prophets. They did not always comprehend the meaning of their own predictions, into which they “searched diligently.” And in this case, it was impossible that, unless the words had been dictated to them, they could have written intelligibly. Although they had written the Scriptures, it was necessary to show them “that which is noted in the Scripture of truth,” Dan. x. 21. The writings of the prophets constitute a great portion of the Old Testament Scriptures, and God claims it as his sole prerogative, to know the things that are to come. We are therefore certain that *they* enjoyed *verbal* inspiration; and, as we have not anywhere a hint of different kinds of inspiration by which the Scriptures are written, does it not discover the most presumptuous arrogance to assert that there are different kinds?

The nature of the mission of the prophets required the full inspiration which they affirm that they possessed. God never intrusted such a work as they had to perform to any man, nor any part of such a work. It was God himself, “who, at sundry times, and in diverse manners, *spake* in time past unto the fathers, *by* the prophets.” That work, through which was to be made known “to principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus,” was not a work to be intrusted to any creature. The prophet Micah, iii. 8, says, “*But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.*” It was not the prophets, then,

who spoke, but the Spirit of God who spoke by them.

Of the complete direction necessary for such a service as was committed to him, both of lawgiver and prophet, Moses was aware, when the Lord commanded him to go to Pharaoh, and to lead forth the children of Israel from Egypt. In that work he entreated that he might not be employed. This proved the proper sense he entertained of his own unfitness for it. But it was highly sinful, and evinced great weakness of faith, thus to hesitate, after the Lord had informed him that he would be "with him." Moses was accordingly reproved for this, but the ground of his plea was admitted; and full inspiration, not only as to the subject of his mission, but as to the very words he was to employ, was promised. In answer to his objection, the Lord said unto him, *Exod. iv. 11, 12*, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and *I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.*" Moses still urged his objection, and the same reply was in substance repeated, both in regard to himself and to Aaron. The full inspiration, then, which was at first promised to Moses in general terms, was, for his encouragement, made known in this particular manner, and the promise was distinctly fulfilled. Accordingly, when, as the lawgiver of Israel, he afterwards addressed the people, he was warranted to preface what he enjoined upon them with, "*Thus saith the Lord,*" or, "*These are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them.*" In observing all the commandments that Moses commanded them, and in remembering the way

by which the Lord had led them, Israel was to learn, that "man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that *proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.*" Signs were shown to Moses, and God came unto him in a thick cloud, in order, as he said, "*that the people may hear thee when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.*" Exod. xix. 9.

If the words of Moses had not been the words of God, had he not been conscious of the full verbal inspiration by which he wrote, would the following language have been suitable to him, or would he have ventured to use it? Deuteronomy, iv. 2: "*Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep these commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.*" Deut. vi. 6: "*And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children,*" &c. Deut. xi. 18: "*Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your head, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates.*" From these passages, we learn that Moses was conscious that all the words which he spoke to the people, were the words of God. He knew that it was with him as with Balaam, to whom the Lord said, Numbers, xxii. 35, 38, "*Only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak;*" and in the language of Balaam, Moses could answer,

“The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.”

As “the word of the Lord,” was communicated to Moses, so it also came to Gad, to Nathan, and to the other prophets, who were men of God, and in whose mouths was the word of God. “*Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth,*” 1 Kings, xvii. 24. The manner in which the prophets delivered their messages, proves that they considered the words which they wrote, not as their own words, but dictated to them by God himself. Elija said to Ahab, “*Behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity.*” On this, Mr Scott, in his Commentary, observes, “Elijah was the voice, the Lord was the speaker, whose words these were.” This is a just account of all the messages of the prophets. They introduce them with, “*Thus saith the Lord,*” and declare them to be “*the word of the Lord ;*” and is it possible that the prophets could have more explicitly affirmed, that the words which they uttered were communicated to them, and that they were only the instruments of this communication to those whom they addressed? In the place where we read, “Now these be the last words of David, the sweet psalmist of Israel,” David says, “*The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue,*” 2 Samuel, xxii. 2. In like manner it is said, “*And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the Prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord,*” 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1, 2. “*Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in the prophets,*” Nehemiah, ix. 30. Isaiah com-

mences his prophecies by summoning the heavens and the earth to hear, "*for the Lord hath spoken,*" Isa. i. 2. In the same manner Jeremiah writes, "*The words of Jeremiah, to whom the word of the Lord came.*" "*Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.*" "*I will make my words in thy mouth fire,*" Jeremiah, i. 1, 2; 9; v. 14. "*Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book,*" Jeremiah, xxx. 2. Again, in the prophecies of Ezekiel, "*Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak my words unto them.*" "*Moreover, he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee, receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears, and go get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God.*" Ezekiel, iii. 4, 10. Hosea says, "*The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea;*" "*The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea,*" i. 1, 2. It is in similar language that the other prophets generally introduce their predictions, which are everywhere interspersed with, "*thus saith the Lord.*"

All, then, that was spoken by the prophets in these several recorded passages, was spoken *in the name of the Lord*. When false prophets appeared, it was necessary for them to profess to speak in the name of the Lord, and to steal his *words* from their neighbour. "*I have heard what the prophets say, that prophecy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak*

my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbour. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith." Jeremiah, xxiii. 25—31. They were the words of God, therefore, which the false prophets stole from the true prophets of Jehovah.

The uniform language of Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, respecting the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures, proves that, without exception, they are "*the Word of God.*" On what principle but that of the verbal inspiration of Scripture, can we explain our Lord's words, John, x. 35, "*The Scripture cannot be broken?*" Here the argument is founded on one word, "gods," which without verbal inspiration might not have been used; and if used improperly, might have led to idolatry. In proof of the folly of their charge of blasphemy, he refers the Jews to where it is written in their law, "I said ye are gods." The reply to this argument was obvious:—The Psalmist, they might answer, uses the word in a sense that is not proper. But Jesus precluded this observation, by affirming, that "the Scripture cannot be broken," that is, not a word of it can be altered, because it is the Word of Him with whom there is no variableness. Could this be said if the choice of words had been left to men? Here, then, we find our Lord laying down a principle, which for ever sets the question at rest. The Apostles, in like manner, reason from the use of a particular word. Of this we have an example,

Hebrews ii. 8, where the interpretation of the passage referred to depends on the word "*all*." Again, Galatians, iii. 16, a most important conclusion is drawn from the use of the word "*seed*," in the singular, and not in the plural number. A similar instance occurs, Hebrews, xii. 27, in the expression "*once more*," quoted from the prophet Haggai.

When the Pharisees came to Jesus, and desired an answer respecting divorce, he replied, "Have ye not read, that *he which made them* at the beginning, made them a male and female? *and said*, for this cause," &c. Thus, what is said in the history, either by Adam or Moses, at the formation of Eve, is appealed to as having the authority of a law. Adam was not a legislator, and nothing that Moses could say, unless dictated by God, could have the force of a law, to be quoted by our Lord. But what was then uttered by man, was the Word of God himself.

The Lord Jesus Christ constantly refers to the whole of the Old Testament, as being, in the most minute particulars, of infallible authority. He speaks of the necessity of every word of the Law and the Prophets being fulfilled. "Till heaven and earth pass, *one jot* or *one tittle* shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled."—"It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than *one tittle* of the Law to fail."—"The Scriptures," he says, "*must be fulfilled*." In numerous passages the Lord refers to what is "*written*" in the Scriptures, as of equal authority with his own declarations; and, therefore, the words which they contain must be the words of God.

The Apostles use similar language in their many references to the Old Testament Scriptures, which

they quote as of decisive authority, and speak of them in the same way as they do of their own writings. “*That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour,*” 2 Peter, iii. 2. Paul says to Timothy, “*From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus,*” 2 Tim. iii. 15. In this way he proves the importance of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the connexion between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. The Apostles call the Scriptures “*the oracles of God,*” Rom. iii. 2. What God says is ascribed by them to the Scriptures: “*The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee.*”—“*For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*”—“*What saith the Scriptures? cast out the bond-woman and her son.*” So much is the Word of God identified with himself, that the Scripture is represented as possessing and exercising the peculiar prerogatives of God: “*The Scripture, forseeing that God would justify the Heathen;*”—“*The Scripture hath concluded all under sin.*”

From the following passages, among others that might be adduced, we learn the true nature of that inspiration which is ascribed to the Old Testament by the writers of the New: Matth. i. 22, “*Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet.*” Matth. ii. 15, “*And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be*

fulfilled which was *spoken of the Lord* by the Prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." Matth. xxii. 43, "He saith unto them, How then doth David *in spirit*, call him Lord?" Mark xii. 36, "For David himself said *by the Holy Ghost*." Luke, i. 70, "As he *spake* by the mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the world began." Acts, i. 16, "Which the *Holy Ghost spoke* by the mouth of David." Acts, xiii. 35. "*He* (God) *saith also* in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." These words are here quoted as the words of God, although addressed to himself. In the parallel passage, Acts ii. 31, the same words are ascribed to David, by whose "mouth" therefore God spoke. Acts, xxviii. 25, "And when they agreed not among themselves they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word: Well *spake the Holy Ghost* by Esaias the prophet, unto our fathers." Rom. i. 2, "Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures." Rom. ix. 25, "As *He saith also* in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her Beloved, which was not beloved." 1 Cor. vi. 16, 17, "What! know ye not, that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, *saith He*, shall be one flesh." Here the words of Adam or of Moses are referred to by the Apostle, as they had been by Jesus Christ himself, as the words of God. Eph. iv. 8, "Wherefore *He saith*, when he ascended up on high." Heb. i. 7, 8, "And of the angels *He saith*;"—"But unto the Son *He saith*." In these passages what was said by the psalmist, is quoted as said by God. Heb. iii. 7, "Wherefore as *the Holy Ghost saith*, To-day if ye will hear his voice." Heb. x. 15, "Whereof the

Holy Ghost also is a *witness* to us, for after that *He* had *said*." 1 Peter, i. 11, "Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when *it testified* beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 2 Peter, i. 20, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation (declaration), for the prophecy came not in old time (at any time), by the will of man, but holy men of God *spake as they were moved* by the Holy Ghost." And how was it possible that they could find language in which to express the mysteries of God which they so imperfectly comprehended, unless the spirit of Christ, which was in them, had dictated every word they uttered? Acts, iv. 25, "*Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the Heathen rage?*" Heb. i. 1, "God, who, at sundry times, and in diverse manners, *spake* in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days *spoken* unto us by his Son." The words, then, spoken by the Prophets, were as much the *words of God*, as the words which were spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And on various occasions Jesus declares, that the words which he spoke were the *words of him* that sent him. John viii. 26, 28, "*I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him;*" —"*As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.*" John, xii. 49, 50, "*I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak;*" —"*Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.*" John, xiv. 10, "*The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself.*" John, xvii. 8, "*I have given unto them the*

words which thou gavest me." John, xvii. 14, "*I have given them thy word.*" And this was in strict conformity with what God had declared by Moses, concerning the divine mission of his Son. Deut. xviii. 18, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and *will put my words in his mouth*; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto *my words which he shall speak in my name*, I will require it of him."—"He hath made *my mouth*," saith the Redeemer, "like a sharp sword," Isaiah, xlix. 2. "And out of *his mouth* went a sharp two-edged sword," Rev. i. 16. And again, God saith to the Messiah, "I have put *my words in thy mouth*," Isaiah, li. 16. "And *my words*, which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth," Isaiah, lix. 21. The words, then, of which the whole of the Scriptures are composed, are the words *dictated* by God, and *written* by men. Sometimes they are quoted as the words of God, and sometimes as the words of the writers, which proves that in fact they are both. Those who deny that, in some instances, the words used by the penmen of Scripture are the words of God, not only contradict the assertion of the Apostle, that *All* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, but also disregard the direct testimony of all those passages that have been quoted above, as well as of a multitude of others to the same effect, that are contained in the Scriptures.

The perfect inspiration which belongs to the *Apostles* may be learned from the nature of that SERVICE to which they were appointed, from the PROMISES which were given to them for the discharge of it, and also

from their own DECLARATIONS, the truth of which is attested, not only by the nature of their doctrine, but by the miracles they wrought.

The commission of the Lord to his Apostles, when he sent them forth in the SERVICE to which he appointed them, was given in these words : Matth. xxviii. 19, "*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*" Here we see, that the commission of the Apostles included the promulgation of the whole doctrine, and of every regulation of the kingdom of God; that it extended to all the world; and that a promise was annexed to it, that the Lord himself would be present with them to the end of time, maintaining and giving efficacy to their testimony, which is recorded in the Scriptures.

This commission is exactly conformable to all that Jesus Christ had at different times said to the Apostles. To Peter, at one time, he declared, Matth. xvi. 19, "*And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*" Afterwards he repeated this to all the Apostles, Matth. xviii. 18. "*Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*" To the same purpose, when he had breathed on them and said, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost,*" John, xx. 22, he added, "*Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto*

them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." In these respects, the Apostles were constituted the authoritative ambassadors of the Lord, and were appointed to an office in which they can have no successors. The laws which, under that authority, they were to establish, and the doctrine they were to promulgate, by which eternal life is conveyed to men, and which is therefore characterised as the keys of the kingdom of heaven, were to be of perpetual and universal obligation. John, xii. 48, "*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words,*" says Jesus, "*hath one that judgeth him : the word that I have spoken,*" — which he had spoken, or was to speak by his Apostles, — "*the same shall judge him in the last day.*" In another place to the same purpose, when speaking of the Apostles having followed him, he says to them, Matth. xix. 28, "*In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*"

The word which the Apostles were to declare, was to open and to shut, to bind and to loose, in heaven and in earth. It was his own word, the word of the Lord, to be uttered by them, by which he would at last judge the world. "*For,*" says he, "*he that receiveth you receiveth me ; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me,*" Matth. x. 40 ; which is to the same effect as when he says to the seventy disciples whom he sent out, "*He that heareth you heareth me ; and he that despiseth you despiseth me ; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me,*" Luke, x. 16. From the awful importance, then, of the service committed to the Apostles, we may judge what kind of in-

piration was necessary for those whose words were to be the words of the judge of all. "*We are unto God,*" say they, "*a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish : To the one we are the savour of death unto death. And to the other the savour of life unto life : and who is sufficient for these things ?*" 2 Cor. ii. 15. The commission of the Apostles embraces every circumstance by which the Divine glory is manifested to every order of intelligent beings—the whole of that revelation of mercy by which the manifold wisdom of God is to be made known to principalities and powers in heavenly places, as well as a complete system of the will of God to mankind. Can it be supposed, then, that the heralds of this salvation did not receive a plenary inspiration to qualify them for such a service? That a prophet should be left to the choice of his own words, and be a prophet from God, or that an Apostle should be commissioned to promulgate the laws of the kingdom of Christ, which are everlastingly to bind in heaven and in earth, and yet be permitted to choose for himself the words and language in which these laws should be delivered, is altogether incredible and absurd. If the words or language are of man's choosing, the Bible becomes partly the book of man and partly the book of God.

The nature of this inspiration, we are also taught by the PROMISES that were given to the Apostles respecting it. When Jesus Christ first sent out his Apostles to proclaim to the house of Israel that his kingdom was at hand, he warned them of the reception they were to meet with, and that they should be brought before governors and kings for his sake. At the same time they were forbidden to use the means which would have been

necessary, if in any measure they had been left to their own judgment. He commanded them to rely entirely upon him, and promised them the inspiration of his Spirit which, in such situations, would be necessary for them: Matth. x. 19, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is *not ye that speak*, but the Spirit of your Father *which speaketh in you.*" Mark, xiii. 11, "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: *for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.*" In the parallel passage, Luke xii. 12, "For the *Holy Ghost shall teach you* in the same hour *what ye ought to say.*" And again, Luke, xxi. 15, "I will give you a *mouth* and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." Language cannot more plainly declare, that the *words* they were to utter, were to be given by inspiration to the Apostles. It was the Holy Spirit who was to speak by them, just as "*God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*" Acts, iii. 21; Luke, i. 70.

If inspiration was necessary for the Apostles in particular passing circumstances, when they were brought before judges and magistrates; and if, in such occasional situations, as on the day of Pentecost, they actually possessed it, how much more necessary must it have been when they were employed in recording the permanent laws of the kingdom of Christ! It must, therefore, be included in the declarations made by our Lord, in what he says in his last discourse, respecting

the Comforter whom he was to send. And that these declarations did refer to the same inspiration, we are not left to conjecture ; for we hear the Apostle Paul, when afterwards he addresses a Christian church, asserting that *Christ spake in him*, 2 Cor. xiii. 3. When about to leave his disciples, Jesus said to them, John, xiv. 26, “ *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*” The Apostles were not to trust to their memories, to repeat what Jesus had said to them ; but *all* that he had said was to be dictated to them by the Holy Ghost. And again, John, xvi. 13, “ *When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself ; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come.*” After his resurrection, Jesus Christ said to them, John, xx. 21, “ *Peace be unto you : as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*” His last words to them on earth were these, Acts, i. 8 : “ *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*” Such were the PROMISES given to the Apostles of what they were to receive, to fit them for that great work in which they were about to engage. We shall now hear their own DECLARATIONS in respect to the fulfilment of them.

On the day of Pentecost, Acts, ii. 4, “ *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*” On that occasion, when speaking in unknown

tongues, as was the case with others of the brethren in the Churches, 1 Cor. xiv. 13, 28, they must have been inspired with every word they spoke, as is asserted in the declaration, that they spoke as "the Spirit gave them *utterance*." When, afterwards, having been brought before the Jewish rulers, they had returned to their own company and prayed, Acts, iv. 31, "The place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the *word of God* with boldness." Paul begins his Epistles by designating himself an Apostle of Jesus Christ. Thus he declares his apostolic character and commission from the Lord, by whom he was qualified for his work. We see with what authority he afterwards expresses himself: "*Now unto him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began; but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.*"—" *Though we,*" says the same Apostle, Galatians, i. 8, "*or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*"—" *As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*"—" *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10, "*But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,*

the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.—“*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth,*” 1 Cor. ii. 13. Here, in making a general declaration of what he taught, both the *matter* and the *words* are declared to be from God. Again he says, 1 Cor. ii. 16, “*For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*” 1 Cor. ii. 7, “*We speak the wisdom of God.*” Eph. iii. 4, “*Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit.*” 2 Cor. ii. 10, “*To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also; for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ.*” 2 Cor. xiii. 2, 3, “*If I come again, I will not spare: since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me.*” In 1 Cor. vii. 17, where some have rashly and ignorantly asserted that the Apostle concludes with expressing a doubt whether he was inspired or not, he says, “*so ordain I in all churches.*” Such language, which is precisely similar to that of Moses, Deut. vi. 6, would have been most presumptuous, unless he could have added, as he does a little afterwards, 1 Cor. xiv. 36, “*What! came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*” At the opening of the same epistle Paul had said, “*My speech and my preaching was not with enticing*

words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."—"We speak the wisdom of God." Could any man have used such language, unless he had been conscious that he was speaking the words of God? 1 Thess. ii. 13, "For this cause also thank we God, without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) *the word of God.*" 1 Thess. iv. 8, "He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not *man* but *God*, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit." 1 Pet. i. 12, "*Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*" 1 Pet. i. 23, "*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*" 1 Pet. i. 25, "*The word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*" In referring to the instruction which they gave to the churches, the Apostles characterise it as their "*commandment,*" and refer to it as equivalent to the authority of the Holy Ghost, as in fact it was the same. Acts, xv. 24, 28, "*It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.*" Such is the inspiration by which all the penmen of the Scriptures wrote, and God has pronounced the most solemn prohibitions against any attempt to add to, or to take from, or to corrupt, his Word. These warnings are interspersed through every part of the sacred volume; and each of them is equally applicable to the whole of it.

In this manner, that portion of the Scriptures called

the *Law* is guarded:—"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it," Deut. iv. 2 ; xii. 32.

In the next division, sometimes called the *Hagiographa*, it is written, "*Every word of God is pure : He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar,*" Prov. xxx. 16. The last part of this threatening is infinitely more terrible than the first ; for transgressors may be reprov'd, and yet find mercy, but "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8.

In the prophetic writings, a similar warning is again repeated. They are closed with an intimation, that no more prophets were to be sent, till the forerunner of Jehovah, who was to come suddenly to his temple, should appear. Israel is then commanded to regard that revelation which had been made to Moses, concerning Jesus, which the prophets had been commissioned to illustrate, but not to alter : "*Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb, for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments,*" Mal. iv. 4.

As, at the conclusion of the Old Testament, where the attention of the people of Israel is called to the first appearance of the Son of God, the Saviour, they are instructed that the prophetic testimony to him is finished ; so, at the conclusion of the New Testament, where the attention of all men is directed to his second coming, as the final Judge, the canon of Scripture is closed, and a solemn and most awful warning is given, neither to add to it, nor to take from it : "*I testify*

unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book," Rev. xxii. 18, 19. This passage, so similar to the others above cited, is, for the same reasons for which it is applicable to the book of Revelation, applicable to the whole inspired volume.

In the references that have been made above to many passages of Scripture, to which many more of a similar import might have been added, the complete verbal inspiration by which both Prophets and Apostles spoke and wrote, has, by their own DECLARATIONS, been unanswerably established. Whatever they recorded, they recorded by the Spirit of God. Whether they spoke in their own tongue, or in tongues which they had not learned; or whether they uttered prophecies which they understood, or concerning which they acknowledged, "I heard, but I understood not;" still they spoke or wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And if we have seen that even the Divine Redeemer himself, *who is over all, God blessed for ever*, when acting, in his mediatorial character, as the Father's servant, *spoke*, as he declares, not of himself, but the *words* of Him that sent him; and that *God the Holy Ghost*, in his office of Comforter, was not to speak of himself, but to *speak* whatsoever he should *hear*; is it to be presumed that Prophets and Apostles should ever have been left to choose the *words* which they have recorded in the Scriptures?

The words, then, which the Prophets and Apostles recorded, were the *words of God*.—*Christ spake in them*,—they were *the words which the Holy Ghost taught*. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit, Eph. vi. 17. “*It is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,*” Heb. iv. 12. This *word* was put into the mouths of the Prophets and Apostles ; and therefore their words and commandments have all the authority of the words and commandments of God. “*I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour,*” 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2. The term inspiration loses its meaning when an attempt is made to divide it between God and man. In what an endless perplexity would any man be involved, who was called upon to give to each degree of inspiration, under which it has been supposed the Bible is written, that portion which belongs to it ! Let any one undertake the task, and he will soon find that he is building on the sand. Yet such an attempt should have been made by those, who, without pretending to plead any authority for it, have presumptuously represented the Scriptures as given partly by an inspiration to which they ascribe various degrees, and partly without inspiration. But where do the Scriptures teach any thing about these different degrees, or intimate that any part of them was given without inspiration ? Can such questions be answered from Scripture ? Can they be answered at all ? Such as adopt distinctions on this subject, professedly speculate and theorise upon it, while they speak of the theories and hypotheses of their opponents ; yet they who maintain the verbal inspiration of

every part of Scripture invent no hypothesis, and have no theories respecting it. Their aim, on the contrary, is to oppose all speculation in this matter, and simply to adhere to the Divine testimony. That every word of Scripture, as originally written, is of God, they believe; because God, who cannot lie, has pledged his truth for the fact. They attribute every thing in the Scriptures, without exception, to the Holy Spirit, because God testifies that *ALL Scripture is divinely inspired.*

But why have such distinctions been introduced? Do they diminish the difficulty of understanding how the inspiration of the Holy Ghost is communicated to the mind of man? Is it easier to conceive that ideas without words should be imparted, than that they should be communicated in words? Instead of being diminished, the difficulty is increased tenfold. But in either case we have nothing to do with difficulties. It is a subject which we cannot comprehend; and in whatever way the effect is produced, it is our duty to believe what the Holy Scriptures assert, and not to resort to those vain speculations by which men darken council by words without knowledge. And let it ever be remembered that difficulties, however great, cannot invalidate a doctrine proved by positive testimony.

The late Mr Scott was involved in the error so common in his day on the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures. In the preface to his commentary, he observes, ‘The author of this work, is decided against any compromise; and he ventures to stand forth, as vindicating the *Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.*’—‘By the *Divine inspiration of the Scriptures*, the author would be

‘ understood to mean, such a complete and immediate
 ‘ communication, by the Holy Spirit, to the minds of
 ‘ the sacred writers, of those things which could not
 ‘ have been otherwise known ; and such an effectual
 ‘ superintendency, as to those particulars, concerning
 ‘ which they might otherwise obtain information ; as
 ‘ sufficed absolutely to preserve them from every degree
 ‘ of error, in all things, which could in the least affect
 ‘ any of the doctrines, or precepts, contained in their
 ‘ writings, or mislead any person who considered them
 ‘ as a divine and infallible standard of truth and duty.’

This definition is inaccurate in the following respects :
 —1st, It confounds inspiration as predicated with respect to the writers of Scripture with inspiration as predicated of Scripture itself. The Scriptures assert indeed that the writers of Scripture were inspired ; but this should not be confounded with the inspiration that is predicated of the Scriptures themselves. Mr Scott, in speaking of the inspiration of the Scriptures, speaks of the writers of Scripture. He is involved in the common error that has prevented so many from perceiving the truth on this subject. 2d, He distinguishes in the Scripture between things that could not have been otherwise known, and things that required superintendency, which is a human figment. 3d, He represents the writers as secured by superintendency from error, not in every thing, but in ‘ all things which could in the least affect any of the doctrines, or precepts.’ This not only deprives a part of the Scriptures of true inspiration, but of true superintendency. It not only makes some things human, but allows that some things may be false. In this respect the Bible would be a book much inferior to many of the works of men. Books

that contain mathematical demonstration are all without error. And many narratives written by men may in every, even the minutest circumstances, be perfectly true. If then errors, though unimportant, are to be found in Scripture, the Bible is a book, as to truth, much inferior to some of the writings of men.

Mr Scott, in his introduction to the prophecies of Isaiah, remarks, ‘Much has been written, concerning the
 ‘ different degrees of inspiration, with which the prophets were endowed : but, I own, I never found
 ‘ satisfaction in any discussion of this subject. Certainly the Scriptures intimate some disparity between
 ‘ Moses and other prophets, and several ways in which
 ‘ divine communications were made : and let others
 ‘ determine what credit is due to the rabbinical determinations in this respect. It seems enough to observe, that the credit of Scriptural prophecy does not
 ‘ depend on such distinctions, but on internal evidence ;
 ‘ and the highest authority, that holy men of God spake
 ‘ as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Probably
 ‘ none, except prophets, ever had an idea, how the
 ‘ illapses of the Holy Spirit came into their minds, and
 ‘ beyond doubt evinced their divine origin. All the
 ‘ prophets were so superintended, both as to the words
 ‘ used by them, and the messages delivered, as to be
 ‘ preserved from error, and to give us the very Word of
 ‘ God : and this is enough for our satisfaction.’ That Mr Scott never found satisfaction in any discussion concerning the “different degrees of inspiration,” is a candid admission, in which it would be well if others would imitate him. But his not finding that satisfaction is not wonderful, since, though much has been written on the *different degrees* of inspiration of the

Scriptures, they themselves contain not one word concerning them. In his remark respecting the several ways in which divine communications were made, there is nothing that is not true, though it shows that Mr Scott's views were extremely deficient on this subject. It is true, as he asserts, that the Scriptures intimate some disparity between Moses and other prophets. But some disparity, the greatest possible disparity, between Moses and other prophets, made no disparity in the inspiration of what was written by Moses, and what was written by the other prophets. It is true, likewise, that there were "several ways in which divine communications were made;" but the way in which the communications were made to the writer, is entirely a different thing from the inspiration of the writing.

It is evident, however, that though Mr Scott has in part adopted the common error respecting inspiration, and shows great misapprehension on this important subject, he had a much more exalted conception of it than the generality of the writers of his time. He avows this in the fullest manner when speaking generally, and vindicates it in that view with the proper Scriptural arguments. If, when he comes to define inspiration, he adopts distinctions, it is evidently to be ascribed not to a desire to degrade the Scriptures, nor to a show of wisdom in explaining what is not revealed, but to a conviction that he was taking the highest ground that he could possibly defend. He shows his sense of the high importance of this doctrine, and his just indignation against those who compromise the honour of revelation in the view they give of inspiration. If he had seen the way in

which, without distinction of kind or degree, it may be asserted of every part of the Word of God, there is reason to believe that he would have adopted it, and have rejoiced in the discovery. He is not then to be treated like those who, when the truth has been exhibited according to Scripture, continue to degrade the Word of God by their pernicious theories.

Every Christian should consider that the view which he takes of the inspiration of the Scriptures is to him of the greatest practical importance. With what a different feeling must that man read the Bible, who believes that it is a book which partly treats of "common and civil affairs," and partly of "things religious," which is partly the production of men, who were sometimes directed in one way, sometimes in another, and who sometimes were not directed at all, and partly the production of God, and that it contains certain things unworthy of being considered as Divine revelation,—from the feeling of the Christian, who reads that sacred book under the solemn conviction that its contents are *wholly* religious, and that *every word of it is dictated by God!* In reading these words, Proverbs, iii. 2, "*My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction,*" how differently must *he* be affected who reads them as addressed to him merely by Solomon, from the man who views them as addressed to him by his heavenly Father, according to Hebrews, ii. 5! Paul, in that Epistle, in making various quotations from the Old Testament, refers to them expressly as the words of the Holy Ghost. As far as distinctions in inspiration are admitted, their tendency is to diminish our reverence for the Bible, and to

exclude the agency of the Spirit of God in its composition. In the same way, men eagerly oppose the doctrine of a particular providence, as one on which it is not "*prudent*" to insist, as not "*necessary*," and as "*attended with difficulties*," while they labour to exclude the agency of God from the government of the world, and from the direction of the course of events, by ascribing the whole to the operation of what are called "the laws of nature."

Dr Doddridge, in his *Essay on Inspiration*, p. 58, after desiring the reader to observe, that in very few instances he has allowed an error in our present copies of the Scriptures, and that, in these few instances, he has imputed it to translators—adds, "because, as *Mr Seed* very properly expresses it, in his excellent *sermon* on this subject (which, since I wrote the former part of this dissertation, fell into my hands), a *partial inspiration* is, to all intents and purposes, *no inspiration at all* : For, as he justly argues against the supposition of any *mixture of error* in these *sacred writings*, mankind would be as much embarrassed to know what was *inspired*, and what was *not*, as they could be to *collect a religion* for themselves ; the consequence of which would be, that we are left *just where we were*, and that GOD put himself to a great expense of *miracles* to effect nothing at all ; a consequence highly derogatory and injurious to his honour." It is not a little remarkable, that such sentiments should thus be approved of by one who, in the same work, has ascribed various degrees of inspiration to different parts of the Scriptures. Let this glaring inconsistency be considered by those who have followed Dr Doddridge in his unscriptural views on this subject.

It is allowed by Dr Doddridge, that under what is called the inspiration of *suggestion*, “the use of our faculties is superseded, and GOD does as it were *speak directly* to the mind; *making such discoveries to it*, as it could not otherwise have obtained, and *dictating the very words* in which these discoveries are to be communicated to others; so that a person, in what he writes from hence, is no other than first *the Auditor*, and then (if I may be allowed the expression) *the Secretary, of GOD*; as *John* was of *our Lord Jesus Christ*, when he wrote from his sacred lips *the seven Epistles* to the *Asiatic Churches*. And it is, no doubt, to an *inspiration of this kind* that the Book of the *Revelation* owes its original.” (Doddridge on Inspiration, page 41). Why, then, has Dr Doddridge supposed that any other part of the Bible was written under an inspiration of a different kind? Where did he learn this? Was it less necessary that the Epistles, which were written to the other churches, as “the commandments of the Lord,” 1 Cor. xiv. 37, should be fully inspired, than for those addressed to the seven churches of Asia? or was it requisite that, to the Book of Revelation, a higher degree of inspiration should belong, than to the other books of the Holy Scriptures? And where, we are entitled to ask, do the Scriptures sanction such distinctions? But if in no part they give the smallest countenance to them, or to any thing similar, what right has any man to introduce them, and to teach what the Scriptures have not only not taught, but the contrary of which they have most explicitly taught? To invent distinctions that consider some parts of the Scriptures as half inspired, and others as not inspired at all, as relating

to things merely civil, is most dishonourable and degrading to the Book of God, and deprives Christians of the edification which such passages are calculated to afford. Such distinctions, let them be made by whom they may, are the offspring of presumption and folly.

On the whole, we see the nature of that inspiration by which the Prophets and Apostles wrote. The manner of communicating the revelations might differ, Numbers, xii. 6, 7, 8. They might be imparted in a vision, or in a dream, or by speaking mouth to mouth; but their certainty and authority were the same. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God *spake* as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Neither was it the Apostles who spoke, but the Spirit of their Father who *spoke* in them, or by them. Let no man, then, venture to introduce distinctions in that inspiration by which the word of God is written, unheard of in that word, and therefore totally unwarranted and unauthorized. It is not for men to say, "How can these things be?" No man comprehends himself, either in soul or in body, nor can we tell how the one acts upon the other: And shall vain man, who "would be wise though man be born like the wild ass's colt," stumble at and reject the declarations of God concerning that inspiration which belongs to his Word, and by which he makes known his pleasure? "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." The Lord is able to communicate His will in whatever way He pleases, although we cannot trace the manner of His operation. In the words

spoken by the ass of Balaam, we have an example of this communication, through an unconscious and involuntary instrument.* In Balaam himself we have an example, through one who was conscious, but involuntary, in the declaration he made respecting Israel. In Caiaphas, through one who was voluntary in what he said, but unconscious of its import. And in the writers of the Scriptures, we have an example of agents both voluntary and conscious, but equally actuated by the Spirit of God.

The dictating of that Law which is perfect, every jot and tittle of which was to be fulfilled,—of those histories which were written for the “admonition” of all future generations,—of the institutions of that kingdom which is to endure for ever,—and of that word by which all shall be judged, was, and necessarily must have been, the work of perfect, that is, the work of infinite wisdom; Psalm. xix. 7, “*The law of the Lord is perfect.*”—But if certain parts of it are the words of men, who wrote merely under a superintendence which preserved them from recording what is false or erroneous, these parts must, like their authors, be imperfect. The same would hold true respecting all that is supposed to be written under an inspiration of elevation, which, whatever it may mean, could not be carried beyond that enlargement of which the mind of man is capable. The Bible can only be perfect, if it be the word of God himself from one end to the other. But, if the words of the writers of it be solely their own

* Under which of the kinds of inspiration, most erroneously so called, did the ass of Balaam speak? Was it under that of *Elevation*? Or shall the truth of the fact be rejected altogether, because it is “attended with *difficulties* !!”

words, or be they the words of angels, principalities, or powers, they are imperfect,—and the Bible is an imperfect book.

The perfection of the Scriptures is necessary, for the purpose they were intended to serve. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork,” Psalm, xix. 1. “By the things that are made,” God’s eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen, so as to render men “without excuse,” Rom. i. 20; and there they leave him under condemnation. But, “*The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*” It is not, then, by the works of creation,—it is not by his dealings towards either holy or fallen angels, that the glory of God is fully displayed. This honour is reserved for the history of the incarnation of his Son. It is here, and here only, that mercy and truth meet together, that righteousness and peace embrace each other;—truth has sprung out of the earth, and righteousness has looked down from heaven. Here justice and judgment are seen to be the habitation of Jehovah’s throne,—and mercy and truth to go before his face.

“*Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it,*” Isaiah, xlv. 8. Here is something far more glorious than all that ever was seen before in the universe of God! It is a righteousness exalted to absolute perfection, and rendered infinitely glorious by the union of

the divine with the human nature. God charged his angels with folly, and the heavens are not clean in his sight, but with him who wrought this righteousness, he is "well pleased."

The righteousness of Adam in innocence, or the righteousness of angels in glory, was the righteousness of creatures, and therefore a limited righteousness. It consisted in the love and service of God, which they rendered with all their heart and strength; but further it could not go. Their righteousness was available in the time only while it continued to be performed, and it might cease and be lost. But that righteousness which the skies have poured down, is a righteousness that is infinite, and that shall never be abolished, Isaiah, li. 6, 8. It is a righteousness that was performed in a limited period of time, by Him who is "CALLED JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS;" but the glory of it was contemplated from eternity, while its efficacy extends back to the fall of man, and forward through all the ages of eternity. It is the "*everlasting righteousness,*" which the prophet Daniel predicted was to be brought in by the Messiah. It is "the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Peter, i. 1, the ministration of which was committed to the Apostles, 2 Cor. iii. 9. Through eternity it shall be the delight of the Father, the admiration of angels, and the song of the redeemed.

It is in the Bible that this righteousness is made known. In the Bible the gospel is recorded, which is the power of God unto salvation, *because therein is the righteousness of God revealed*, Rom. i. 17. The Bible contains the record of the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus,—of the unsearch-

able riches of Christ,—of the eternal election of Him to be the Mediator between God and man, and of the eternal election of His people in Him,—of His incarnation, humiliation, and exaltation to glory. And “in as much as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house,” insomuch is there a higher display of the glory of God, in the history contained in the Bible, of Him who was “God manifest in the flesh,” than is afforded in the creation, and the discovery of all the other works of God in the universe, animate and inanimate, of which Jesus Christ is the Creator and the Head. Hence is that preference justified which is given to the Bible above them all, “*Thou hast magnified thy WORD above all thy name.*” The earth and the heavens shall perish,—“As a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed,—*But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*”

Such, then, is the perfection of the Bible, to every part of which, inspiration, in its proper meaning, was absolutely indispensable, in order that it should be entirely the word and the work of God,—in thought,—in meaning,—in style,—in expression,—in every part, and in the strictest sense, the word or voice of God to man. Each part is necessary in its place to complete the whole,—and if any one part were wanting, however inconsiderable it may appear, that absolute perfection, that complete adaptation to the end proposed, which belong to the *Book of God*, would be destroyed.

Christians ought to beware of giving up in the smallest degree the inspiration of the Bible. That precious deposit is now delivered to their keeping, as the first portion of it was committed to the Jews. The Jews

were constituted the “witnesses” of Jehovah, Isaiah, xliii. 10, 12; until the time arrived, when, in his sovereign pleasure, he appointed other “witnesses,” Acts, i. 8. The nation of Israel was his peculiar treasure,—an holy nation, Exodus, xix. 5, 6; till, by their final rejection of his Son, they forfeited that title, and he gave his vineyard to other husbandmen, Matth. xxi. 41. They possessed the peculiar name which he had conferred on them, till the prophecy concerning it was fulfilled, when it was left “for a curse,” Isaiah, lxxv. 15; and when a new name was bestowed on those who were henceforward to be acknowledged as the people of God, Acts, xi. 26; 1 Peter, vi. 16. Having become the depositaries of the whole volume of inspiration, let *Christians* regard it with the same unshaken fidelity, with which, before being completed, “*the WORDS which the Lord of Hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former prophets,*” Zechariah, vii. 7, 12, were preserved by the *Jews*. Let them not weaken by vain reasonings, the impression produced upon their minds by the testimony of the Bible itself concerning its full inspiration in every part, nor substitute for it, a book which, in their imagination, is only partially inspired,—which contains sometimes the words of God, and sometimes the words of men, who spake not as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, but who were only preserved from error, or who wrote “*as any other plain and faithful men might do.*” By such sentiments, the offspring of philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, has the Bible been degraded, and its high title to the designation of “the oracles of God” made void. In opposition to these heretical opinions, be they ancient

or modern, let every disciple of Him whose command it is to "search the Scriptures," regard it as a *faithful* saying, and not liable to doubtful interpretations, that "*ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*"

The testimony to the truth of the Scriptures, and consequently to the Messiah, which arises from their inspiration, is of the strongest kind. By presenting themselves as *inspired*, they bring the truth of their contents to the most decisive test. They occupy ground which nothing but *truth* and *perfection* could enable them to maintain. Could any thing absurd, or false, or erroneous, be found in them ; could the smallest flaw in the character or doctrine of the Author of Salvation, any degree of weakness, or of want of wisdom, be detected, they must immediately be compelled to relinquish this ground. The claim of inspiration is an assertion of the infinite importance, and incomparable excellency of the matter which they contain as communicated by God, and as what man, without them, never could have discovered ; and also that it is delivered in a style suitable to the dignity of what they present. They contain many chains of prophecies, as well as multitudes of detached predictions, now fulfilling, or that have been fulfilled in different ages ; and they defy the perspicacity of man to falsify a single one of them. They assert a number of facts respecting various particulars of the creation, age, and history of the world ; of a general deluge ; of the descent of all mankind from a single pair ; of the primeval condition of man, as civil-

ized, and not savage; of the origin of a variety of universal customs, otherwise unaccountable, as of sacrifice, and of the division of time by weeks. Yet, after all the severest scrutinies of the most enlightened, as well as most inveterate opposers in ancient and modern times, not one fact which they assert has been disproved. On the contrary, these facts are constantly acquiring fresh evidence, from various sources. The harmony, too, of the doctrine of the several writers of Scripture is particularly observable, and forms a striking contrast to the discordant opinions, inconsistencies, and self-contradictions of the Greek and Roman, as well as of modern writers, on almost every subject of which they treat.

Since, then, the Scriptures advance a claim that nothing but their truth could sustain, and which, if false, could be so easily disproved; since they constitute the only book ever published that could bear such a test, there is the most demonstrative evidence that they are the Word of God. The industry and researches of philosophers have detected error in the noblest productions of ancient wisdom, but all the light of science, throughout all the ages of the world, has not been able to discover one single error in the Bible.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE correspondence between the Scriptures of the Old Testament and the New, written in ages so re-

mote, and the ultimate accomplishment of the former in that system to which, from the beginning, it was subservient, afford a demonstrative proof of their truth. The grand design of both these sacred volumes, is to exhibit the plan and execution of the work of redemption by the Messiah. The first contains the account of what preceded his advent ; the second, of his manifestation. From the creation of the world to the time of the appearance of Jesus Christ, comprehending a period of 4000 years, a great and connected scheme of preparation for that event was carried on, which is exhibited in the HISTORY, the MIRACLES, the TYPES, and the PROPHECIES, recorded in the Old Testament. From these four sources, a body of evidence may be deduced that is truly astonishing, even when they are considered separately ; but, when united, they present the most complete demonstration of the truth of revelation. Beginning with the History, we shall afterwards proceed to each of the others in its order.

A large proportion of the Scriptures of the Old Testament consists in historical narrations, which transmit to us the knowledge of many most important events, the account of which is nowhere else to be found. This history is not, however, to be regarded merely as a record of curious, ancient, and interesting facts, valuable as authentic documents of important affairs. Its design is not to gratify curiosity, but to instruct. It is a selection of facts, divinely recorded as profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. It contains examples to be followed or avoided, most extensively applicable, and many of them couching in figure spiritual truths for the confirmation of the faith of the remotest ages. Civil his-

tory, even as written by men, conveys much instruction as to the ways of Providence, and he reads it to little advantage who does not trace the hand of the Omnipotent Ruler of the world in all the affairs of men. But this is only a general lesson, which the historian, instead of wishing to teach generally, endeavours to keep out of sight. However well inclined the uninspired historian may be, we depend on his own judgment only for the selection of his facts, and his best efforts do not aim at that peculiar kind of moral and spiritual instruction conveyed by inspired history.

The historical parts of Scripture are all designed to teach spiritual lessons to the people of God. The Spirit of God has made a selection of the facts that are recorded. These facts are exhibited only in that light, to that extent, and with those observations, that Divine wisdom judged necessary. In this view, the historical portions of the Word of God afford scope for never-ending meditation. While one or two readings will make us acquainted with all the instruction conveyed in the writings of uninspired authors, the facts recorded in the Scriptures, which human wisdom has often considered barren and uninteresting, afford an inexhaustible fund of spiritual instruction. After we have read them a thousand times with profit, we may read them again with an assurance of increasing edification. Instead of expressing arrogant regret that the Scriptures do not contain fuller information on points on which we would wish further light, convinced of their fulness and of our own blindness, our prayer in reading them ought to be, "Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

The historical parts of Scripture are both introduc-

tory to, and illustrative of, the plan of redemption. The general importance, in a religious point of view, of the great outline of the narrations of the Fall,—of the Flood,—of the calling of Abraham, and of the election of the people of Israel,—of their deliverance from Egypt, and their being put in possession of the promised land, must be universally acknowledged. But the whole of the minute detail by which that outline is filled up, is likewise in the highest degree instructive, and ought to be perused with the most devout attention. The Bible history describes, in action and exhibition, the perfections of Jehovah, as fully as the proclamation in which he declares himself to be long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and by no means clearing the guilty. It delineates the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart, as forcibly and distinctly as the annunciations of the prophets, when they “cry aloud and spare not.” In the narratives of Scripture, the dependent state, the perverseness, and the folly of man, and the secret motives by which he is actuated, as well as the power, the wisdom, the justice, and the goodness of God in his providential government, and above all in redemption, are vividly depicted. There is not a battle fought by the Israelites, nor a change in the administration of their government, the account of which is not designed for our instruction. There is not an incident recorded as taking place in a private family, that has not a significant meaning.

In Scripture history, there are many things which, considered only in themselves, appear to be of no value, or, at least, of very little importance; but in reality the Bible contains nothing superfluous—nothing which

does not contribute to its perfection, and to the evidence of its Divine origin. Besides the lists of names in genealogies, we observe many other things in the Word of God, the knowledge of which seems to be of no use ; yet their importance might be proved by numerous examples. We find in the Old Testament several regulations and narrations, which, in appearance, contribute neither to the strengthening of faith, nor to instruction or consolation. In the books of Moses, matters of the greatest importance are often only touched upon in a few words, while, on the contrary, many things that seem inconsiderable, are dwelt upon at great length. The redemption by the Messiah, which God promised to man immediately after his fall—the calling of the Gentiles predicted to Abraham—the priesthood of Melchisedic, the most illustrious figure of Christ, and many other points of important doctrine, are only noted in a very summary manner. On the other hand, the nativity of Ishmael, the marriage of Isaac, and similar histories, are amply detailed, even in the most minute particulars, but all of them are full of instruction. The single account of Hagar and Ishmael, as interpreted by the Apostle Paul, even to the most inconsiderable circumstances, shows us how we ought to judge of other histories of the Old Testament, although we do not perceive their object.

Various particulars, apparently of little consequence, which the Scriptures relate very fully, prove in what way effects the most wonderful have proceeded from causes in themselves inconsiderable ; for instance, the birthright of Jacob. God is pleased so teach great things, by things that are small. The prohibitions to take the dam with its young ones in the nest, and not

to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, extend farther than at first appears. The act of Jesus Christ in stretching out his hand to touch the leper, does not seem of any moment, except to those who know the law which declares that it occasioned uncleanness. The same law forbade the High Priest, who represented Jesus Christ, to enter any house in which there was a dead body. Notwithstanding this, the Lord even touched a bier. In all these particulars, there is a fulness of important doctrine.

There are many who, not being acquainted with what the Scripture has in view, are astonished at the recital of different enormities which it particularizes so carefully. The incest of Judah with the wife of his son, might seem to be a fact which should rather have been buried in his tomb, than inserted in the Sacred History, with so many shameful circumstances. Yet, if the arrogance of the Jews is considered, who glory in their extraction, and who even found their election as a nation and their covenant upon the virtues of their ancestors, we shall see that their errors could not be better refuted, nor their pride more effectually humbled, then by holding up to view the deeply culpable conduct of their progenitor. The record of the sins of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, was calculated to warn Israel not to seek salvation by the works of the law. The omission of the Genealogy of Melchisedec, of his birth, and of his death, denoting the eternity of Jesus Christ, and his everlasting priesthood, proves how much even the silence of the Scripture is instructive. Every distinct fact recorded in Scripture history may be truly considered an article of faith; for in the plan of salvation, matters of fact become doctrines, and doctrines

matters of fact. Every fact points to that great event upon which the salvation of man depends—the coming of the Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh, to redeem a peculiar people to himself—or in some way illustrates his salvation.

The object, then, of the historical records in Scripture, is essentially different from that of all other histories. They are not given, to preserve the memory of certain occurrences, in order to promote the knowledge of what may be useful in regard to the affairs of this world, and to extend the sphere of human intelligence and experience ; but exclusively to teach the knowledge of God and salvation. Scripture history is conducted in such a manner, that, like the doctrinal parts of the Bible, it is foolishness to the men of the world. It disappoints them in the nature of the facts which it relates, and also in the manner in which they are exhibited. It not only records truth, without the smallest mixture of error, but also invariably keeps in view the agency of God in every occurrence,—in events the most minute, as well as the most considerable ; and thus it furnishes a perpetual comment on the sublime description of the Apostle, when, penetrated with admiration of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, he exclaims, “ Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things ; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

The History of the Old Testament, which we are now to consider in the light of the evidence it affords to the truth of the gospel, commences with a narrative of the creation of the world, of which it furnishes the only rational and intelligible account that exists.* It repre-

* “ Compare the account of the creation which is given by
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sents God in the exercise of omnipotent power, calling the world into existence, reducing it to order, and fitting it for the accommodation of man, its principal inhabitant. This was effected gradually in the course of six days. Infinite power could as easily have created all things in a moment as in the most lengthened period ; in six seconds, as easily as in six days, or six thousand years. But in this way time is given to contemplate one thing as it arose after another. Every thing was created perfect in its kind ; and man was formed in the image of God, and capable of enjoying communion with him.

The goodness of God was displayed in the happiness of that condition in which man was placed. The tenure by which he held it was his continuance in his original purity. God did not, however, confirm his stability in holiness, but committed it to himself, while he placed him in a state of trial in which the greatest advantages were enjoyed, and the strongest inducements held out to persevere in obedience. Nor was the inheritance of which he was put in possession, although unspeakably glorious, constituted necessarily permanent. It might be corrupted, it might be defiled, and it might fade away. The reverse of these conditions, both as to their regenerated nature, and the new inheritance with which they shall be invested, belongs only to the sons

Moses with the ravings of Sanchoniatho, the Phœnician philosopher, which he has dignified with the title of *Cosmogony* ; or compare it with the childish extravagances of the Greek and the Latin poets, so justly likened to a sick man's dreams ; and then say whether any person of candour and discernment will not be disposed to exclaim, in the words of the prophet, ' What is the chaff to the wheat ! ' ”

of the new creation, who are sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise. Jer. xxxii. 40. 1 Peter, i. 4.

A test of obedience every way suited to the circumstances of man being appointed, and life and death set before him, he speedily transgressed the command of God, and, yielding to temptation, fell from his state of innocence and happiness. A higher order of beings had sinned and rebelled against God. One, superior to the rest, actuated by malignity against God and all his works—the prince of the fallen angels—entered the serpent for the purpose of concealment, and through that animal, as the instrument and medium of communication, addressed the mother of mankind. He falsely pretended to have discovered the excellence of the forbidden fruit, assured her that the threat annexed to transgression would not be executed, but that, on the contrary, the happiest effects would follow the eating that fruit, and thus seduced her to disobey the commandment of God.

This temptation has often been made a subject of ridicule, as being of a very trifling description. On the contrary, it presented motives to disobedience, the most powerful that can be conceived. It included the whole circle of Satan's temptations, being calculated at once to excite "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;" accompanied with an assurance that no punishment would follow transgression; and to all this was added, in the case of Adam, the strength of his affection for his wife. "And when the woman saw that the tree was *good for food*, and that it was *pleasant to the eyes*, and a tree to be desired to *make one wise*, she took the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did

eat." Man was in this manner involved in rebellion against his Creator. Sin entered the world, and death by sin. An immediate change took place. They who had before enjoyed the friendship of God, by whom they were surrounded with all the blessings of creation, now trembled when they heard his voice, and fled to hide themselves among the trees of the garden. Called from the place of their concealment, and charged with the sin they had committed, the man laid it on the woman, who again charged it on the serpent. In this situation, with all his guilt discovered, Adam stood exposed to the full rigour of the punishment annexed to disobedience. But God in judgment remembered mercy. A way of salvation was announced, in which, while sin was to be punished in a manner the most awful, life and happiness, beyond the possibility of a second forfeiture, were to be awarded in consequence of the most perfect fulfilment of the divine law.

The intimation of a Saviour to come was given in the sentence which God immediately pronounced on the serpent ; and we learn, from what follows, that our first parents accepted it as a revelation of mercy to man. For as soon as God had also declared the suffering state, to terminate in death, to which, on account of their disobedience they were now to be subjected, Adam called his wife's name Eve. Formerly, when in a state of innocence, and when God had blessed them, saying, "be fruitful and multiply," he called her "woman, because she was taken out of man." But now when the sentence of death is pronounced upon them, he calls her Eve, (*Life*), intimating his persuasion, that in her seed another life was, according to the promise of God, provided. The piety of the expres-

sion of Eve on the birth of her first-born son, whether or not she supposed him to be the promised seed, should be particularly remarked. "I have gotten a man from the Lord," or "a man, even Jehovah." The new feeling of shame which our first parents experienced, as well as the change in the serpent's appearance consequent on the sentence pronounced on him, must have been strong confirmations to them, that all the future threatenings and promises contained in the sentence would also be verified.

The sentence was passed on the transgressors successively in their order. The man was first questioned as to his transgression, and next the woman; but to the serpent God put no question, having for him no purpose of mercy. His doom, who had acted the part of a deceiver, was first pronounced. Peculiar and mortifying trials were adjudged to the woman who had given of the tree to her husband, under whose dominion she was now placed; and a life of labour and sorrow was to be the portion of the man till he returned to the dust, and on his account the earth was cursed. The fulfilment of these judgments has been experienced in all ages by every individual in the successive generations of mankind, though few comparatively trace them to their proper source. Afflicting, however, as they are, they do not exhaust the awful import of that denunciation, of which, to multitudes, they are only its preludes—"in the day that thou eatest thou shalt surely die,"—a sentence which, in its full extent, will only be executed personally on those who shall be delivered over to the second death.

The curse that fell upon the ground intimated an extraordinary change on the face of the earth. Thorns

and thistles it was from this time to bring forth, and only to produce the food necessary for the sustenance of man, through his incessant labour, instead of spontaneous fruits. The introduction of this new state of things must have been attended with remarkable and visible effects, which, in conjunction with the overflowing of the waters of the deluge, will account for those extensive indications of great convulsions that are witnessed in every part of the globe. In this manner the introduction of sin explains the appearances of disorder in the elements, and shows the cause of the accumulation of human misery and toil, which otherwise, under the government of God, who is infinite in goodness, wisdom, and power, would be altogether inexplicable, and apparently inconsistent and at variance with these attributes. It is to this state of things that the Apostle Paul refers, when he declares that the whole creation is made subject to vanity, and groaneth and travaileth together in pain, under the bondage of corruption. But all this disorder, while it proves the truth of Scripture history, is overruled for good. The sentence that imposes on man a life of labour, though bearing, as it does, the evident marks of divine displeasure, is converted into a blessing, and is a necessary and gracious appointment, without which, society, in the present depraved state of human nature, could not subsist, while every thing around him loudly proclaims that this is not his rest.

As soon as the sentence of sorrow and death was pronounced, the mercy that had been intimated to our first parents began to take effect. God made coats of skins, and clothed them. This emblematical representation, on the institution of sacrifice, of that robe of

righteousness to be provided through the one sacrifice by which sin was to be put away, was calculated greatly to encourage their hopes and strengthen their confidence in the promised blessing, which began to operate in this token of the fatherly care and kindness of God. They were, however, immediately driven out from the garden, while cherubims and a flaming sword were placed to keep the way to the tree of life, no longer accessible to man, according to the first constitution, "Do this and live." But, consonant to the promise that had just been given, concerning the Deliverer who was to spring from the woman, a new and living way of access to that tree was opened, the providing of which forms the whole subject of the Gospel History.

Soon after the expulsion of Adam from paradise, sin, in the most hideous and distressing form, appeared in the murder of his younger brother by the first man that was born. Thus it was evident, that the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent already wrought. "Cain," says the Apostle, "was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

The history of Adam and his posterity, which soon became numerous, is carried forward, in a very compendious manner, from this time till the flood. Cain, driven out from the presence of the Lord, employed himself in building a city, which he called after his first-born son. But, after relating the names of some of his descendants, the history is continued in the line of Seth, whom Eve acknowledged to be given her by the Lord, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. The object of Scripture history is not to record events that lead to

temporal aggrandizement ; on these it touches but occasionally, and only as they stand connected with the great and only end it has in view,—the advent of the Messiah, and the erection of his kingdom.

In the days of Enos, the son of Seth, it is remarked, that “men began to call upon the name of the Lord.” Whether this signifies that at that time they first began to worship God in public assemblies, or that a more marked distinction then took place between the children of God and the men of the world, it certainly intimates that some visible progress was made in attention to the service of God.

Of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, it is recorded that, “He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.” These words are the more remarkable, as, in summing up the lives of the other antediluvians, whose ages were prolonged to the extraordinary term of nearly a thousand years, it is uniformly said, “and he died.” Enoch was a distinguished example of one who obeyed God, and held intimate communion with him. We are informed by an Apostle, that he prophesied of the coming of the Lord, and warned ungodly sinners of the consequence of their ungodly deeds, proclaiming to them a future judgment, and the separation that would then be made between the righteous and the wicked. In confirmation of the great truths which he had been employed to declare, “he was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God translated him ; for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God.” Thus, by means of Enoch, an increase of light was vouchsafed, and a striking intimation given of a future state ; together with a representation of the restoration of the body as

well as of the soul from the ruins of the fall, both of which were according to this example to be delivered from death. The translation of Enoch before the law, and of Elijah under the law, as well as the ascension to heaven after the law of Him who, having obtained the victory over death and the grave, is "the first fruits of them that slept," are highly important events, not only as making manifest, in their several periods, the reality of a future state, but as proving that the people of God, in every period, are partakers of the same salvation.

The most remarkable occurrence recorded in the history, after the translation of Enoch, is a great apostasy from the service of God, which arose from the sons of God intermarrying with the daughters of men. This sinful connexion between the children of God and the children of the wicked one, that is between believers and unbelievers, the ruinous consequences of which are so often pointed out in Scripture, opened a floodgate to wickedness. The effect soon appeared in their descendants, who, instead of obtaining "a good report through faith," became mighty men of renown. The earth was filled with violence, and "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, and that continually." The consequence was, that "the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." A great convulsion took place, of which the earth everywhere bears evident marks to this day. It was overwhelmed with a flood during five months, which prevailed above the highest hills. For 120 years, Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, had given warning to the ungodly world, and called them to repentance; but they refused to listen. "They were eating and

drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away." And now, as an Apostle declares, 1 Pet. iii. 19, they are "spirits in prison,"—the prison of hell, a fact truly awful, and a solemn warning to all who neglect as they did to seek the righteousness of God; that righteousness which the Messiah was to bring in, of which Noah was a preacher, 2d Peter, ii. 5, and of which through faith he was an heir. Heb. xi. 7.

In this general wreck, occasioned by the wickedness of man, Noah only, with his family, and the animals in pairs, were saved in an ark, which in faithful obedience, being warned of God, he had prepared, and in which he remained a year and ten days. Exact computations have been made of the size of the ark, of the number of animals preserved in it, and of the quantity of food necessary for their sustenance, from which it is ascertained that it was of sufficient dimensions to contain the whole. Miraculous interposition seems to be seldom, if ever, resorted to, where ordinary means will accomplish the end. The objection which is sometimes raised, "whence came such a quantity of water as was necessary to overflow the earth, and what became of it afterwards," is too absurd and atheistical to merit notice. "BEHOLD I, EVEN I, DO BRING A FLOOD OF WATERS UPON THE EARTH." Shall this answer not be sufficient to stop the mouth of the scoffer? Could not the great Lord of all, who "in the beginning created the heavens and the earth" *out of nothing*, both produce and remove at pleasure the waters of the flood? How irrational are such objections, when advanced by a puny creature, against him who, as the great creator and up-

holder of all things, measures the earth with his span ; and "holdeth the waters in the hollow of his hand !" The Christian with far truer philosophy, although with a humbler spirit, is content to know, that it pleased God then to put forth his almighty power for the purpose of executing his curse on the earth, by causing it to perish by water, as it is now reserved by the same omnipotence for universal destruction by fire.

Immediately after the flood, when the Lord commanded Noah to come out of the ark, he accepted the sacrifice that Noah offered, and made over to him a new grant of the earth, engaging by a covenant, whereof the rainbow is the token, that it shall not again be overflowed with water. "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." The grant of animal food, as that of vegetable had formerly been given to Adam, was now made to man, into whose hands all the animals were delivered, and the fear and dread of him was impressed upon them. At this time also, the life of man was greatly shortened in comparison of its former duration.

When men began again to increase in the earth, they were all of one speech, and, in opposition to God, and in pursuit of vain glory, desiring "to make themselves a name," and to avoid being "scattered," they began to build a city, and a tower of vast height. This appears to have been the city of Babylon, in after ages so remarkable for its oppression of the people of God, and for the final ruin in which it was plunged. On this occasion God visibly manifested his displeasure, by confounding their language, and scattering them abroad upon the face of all the earth. This confusion of tongues,

which has continued ever since in the great variety of languages that obtains all over the world, and which cannot be accounted for in any other way, constitutes a standing monument of the truth of the fact thus recorded.

Notwithstanding the visible tokens of God's abhorrence of sin, first in destroying nearly the whole inhabitants of the earth by a flood, then in confounding their language, and scattering them over the face of the earth, to prevent their ungodly combination, the whole earth soon relapsed into idolatry. Even that line of which the Messiah was to descend, partook of the general corruption. But now, in another remarkable manner, God interposed, by raising up an individual, whom he called from idolatry, and constituted the progenitor of the Messiah, and the father of believers. As in Abraham's family God purposed to carry forward the plan of salvation, he took him from his kindred, and sent him into a distant country. In that land he was to sojourn as a pilgrim and stranger, detached from the contagion of idolatry; and there his posterity were to remain, a people separate from all the rest of the world. This calling of Abraham took place about 2000 years before the coming of Christ, and nearly at the same distance of time from the first promise to Adam.

To Abraham, on different occasions, God renewed the promise made to our first parents, confirming it by an oath, with the limitation of the immediate descent from him of the Messiah. "In *thy* seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Along with spiritual blessings, and both as pledges of these, and as a medium through which they should be conveyed, he also

promised to him great temporal benefits. "Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." This being recorded, showed the manner in which the blessing of righteousness to be provided in the obedience of the Son of God was to be conveyed, even by faith.

Abraham's faith was long tried; and notwithstanding the promise of a numerous offspring, and the blessing of salvation included in it, Sarah his wife, till long after it was possible in natural course, bore no child. The promise was, however, from time to time, renewed to Abraham, who was strong in faith, giving glory to God. At length Isaac was born, in whose line the promises were to run. When Abraham saw Isaac born out of the common course, and beyond all expectation, except what rested on the faithfulness of God, he received a pledge of the fulfilment of every other promise that had been made to him.

A minute history is recorded of Abraham's family, and of his son Ishmael by a bondswoman, as well as of his son Isaac by Sarah his wife. Ishmael having been discovered mocking Isaac, Sarah required that he should be cast out of the family. This might appear to be only a private narrative of an occurrence that was likely to happen in any family in similar circumstances. But the Scripture history is dictated by inspiration of God, and is to be read with a degree of respect and attention very different from what is due to other writings. In this transaction, permitting the bad passions of human nature to exert themselves in a way that is so common, God gave a representation of the two covenants, the old and the new; the first made with Israel after the flesh, the second with Israel

after the spirit, on account of which the former is now cast out and abolished.

In the days of Abraham God gave another awful proof "of the certainty of the vengeance of eternal fire unto all those that after should live ungodly." The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, on account of the enormous wickedness of their inhabitants, were destroyed by fire. This destruction fell upon them in the same unexpected manner in which the flood had come upon the earth, when, like its former inhabitants, they were wholly engrossed with the things of this world. "They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all." From this catastrophe, the visible traces of which remain to this day, Lot only, with his two daughters, was delivered. Thus "God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow." This destruction was not only calculated to impress the fear of God on the inhabitants of that country, but also to secure the lives of his servants, and to teach them to live more separate, both from the people and the manners of the land.

After Abraham's death, God renewed his covenant with Isaac, and afterwards with Jacob, who received a striking confirmation of the promised blessing, when at Peniel, on his way to meet his brother Esau, he saw "God face to face," in the human form, who blessed him there. On this occasion, the Messiah manifested himself by anticipation in a very remarkable manner, as when, before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, he appeared as a traveller to Abraham ;

and afterwards to Joshua, as a man in armour, "the Captain of the Lord's host;" and in similar ways to others, on various occasions, during the Old Testament dispensation.

Jacob and his family, through a remarkable train of providential occurrences, were led into Egypt, and there brought into bondage, and cruelly oppressed. But after they had increased to a great multitude, God, by the hand of Moses, brought them out of that country, and took signal vengeance on their enemies. In this manner the descendants of Abraham, in the line of Isaac, when they had almost entirely relapsed into idolatry, were separated, like their great progenitor, from the other nations with whose manners they were infected. And thus the promise (Gen. xv. 13, 14) that God had made to Abraham respecting the deliverance of his descendants, and the punishment of their oppressors, was, as is recorded by Moses, at the set time fulfilled. "The sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day, it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord, for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations." Afterwards Joshua, when he had led the people into the promised land, made to them, at his death, this solemn appeal: "And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed, of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke

concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." And again, Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, celebrated, as follows, the faithfulness of God, "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel; according to all that he promised, there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."

The Israelites might soon have entered the land that had been given to their fathers, but God, having important purposes to serve by it, saw good to detain them in the intervening wilderness during forty years. They were there to be formed into a separate nation, under circumstances different from those of any other people that ever had been on earth. God himself became their king and lawgiver, and made with them a peculiar covenant. They were also to be reclaimed from the superstitions and idolatry of Egypt, into which they had deeply drank, and by witnessing a long train of miraculous interpositions in their behalf, a deep and lasting impression was to be produced. In the wilderness the law was given to Israel as a nation, and the promise of the inheritance of Canaan, and of other peculiar privileges, ratified. One of the tribes was set apart for the priesthood. The tabernacle, of which the exact pattern had been shown to Moses, was erected as the visible habitation of the God of Israel, in which he was "to dwell among them;" and the pillar of cloud and of fire, that had conducted them through the sea, rested on the tabernacle, and directed them in all their wanderings while in the wilderness. Thus, in the language of the Apostle, to Israel pertained "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the

giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever."

While, however, these distinguished and unexampled privileges were bestowed on the nation of Israel, they were expressly informed, that the Lord had not chosen them on account of their number or greatness—for they were reminded that they had been the fewest of all people—but of his own sovereign pleasure, and because of the promise he had made unto their fathers. On the other hand, they were often declared to be a stiff-necked people. This was analogous to the whole procedure of Him "who giveth not account of his matters," and who hath mercy on whom he will have mercy. "Blessed is the man whom he chooseth, and causeth to approach unto him." So in like manner, under the New Testament dispensation, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise ; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, *that no flesh should glory in his presence.*"

Of the character of the Israelites, however, many form a more unfavourable opinion than is warranted by fact. "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light," and in the holy Scriptures divine truth shines forth in so conspicuous a manner, that every thing of a contrary nature is strikingly exposed. In all uninspired histories, a very partial statement of facts is presented, while the secret motives of men's actions remain unknown.

Abundant proof is indeed afforded that the earth is filled with violence ; but the greatest evils are often concealed or glossed over, while false principles are appealed to and inculcated. In the Scriptures, on the other hand, nothing is concealed, disguised, or misrepresented. All is impartially narrated ; and the whole being exhibited in connexion with the purity of the Divine character, the contrast is more apparent and striking. From not attending to this, the men of the world are often shocked with the narratives which the Scriptures contain. The character of the people of Israel, and of many individuals whose histories they record, appears to them to be greatly worse than that of the grossest idolaters ; and the account given in the Bible of some of those whose conduct on the whole stands approved by God, seems to sink below that standard of moral rectitude, to which they suppose that themselves and others who make no pretensions to religion, have attained. Not being accustomed to measure themselves by a perfect standard, but by one reduced to what they term their own " imperfection," they are not aware of the real state of human nature. Christians, who are all in a degree acquainted with the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of their hearts, draw a very different conclusion from these faithful narrations contained in the Bible, which are to them an irrefragable testimony to its truth. Such narratives are not anywhere else to be met with, even in those books whose principles are derived from the Scriptures. When we compare with them the biography of the most enlightened Christians, the contrast is manifest and striking. In order to form a just estimate respecting the character of the Israelites, it is necessary to observe the accounts that both the

Old Testament and the New present of the other nations, and particularly to attend to the picture which, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, is drawn of the civilized heathens. From these we must be convinced that the deeper shades of depravity that darken the annals of the people of Israel, are to be ascribed not to their being actually worse than others, but to the fact, that their history has been more faithfully transmitted.

On account of the rebellious conduct of the Israelites, on hearing the report from those who had been sent to explore the promised land, of the power of its inhabitants, exemplary punishment was inflicted on them, and till it was executed they were detained in the wilderness. With only two exceptions, all of those who had been above twenty years of age, when they departed from Egypt, died in the wilderness. On this occasion the duration of the life of man was contracted to its present usual period. Before the flood, it had extended to about 900 years. But immediately after that catastrophe, it was reduced in the first generation to 600, and in the next to between 400 and 500 years. Afterwards it was gradually diminished till the time of this murmuring of the Israelites at the report of the spies, when it was reduced to its present standard, according to the 90th Psalm, which Moses wrote, as is supposed, on that occasion: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away." After the expiration of forty years, the people entered the promised land, expelled the inhabitants by the command of God, and took possession of the country. This occu-

pation of their land, and the execution inflicted on its ungodly possessors, had been purposely delayed, *till the measure of their iniquity was full.*

Objections have been daringly advanced against the authenticity of the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures, and through them against that of the New, on account of the command to extirpate the Canaanites, as if it were repugnant to every idea we ought to entertain of the character of God. Such impious cavils proceed on partial and inconsiderate views. Is it in any respect contrary to the moral character of God, that, under his righteous government, men should be punished for their sins? Might not God, with equal justice, destroy those nations whom "the land spewed out," on account of their iniquities, as inflict vengeance on Sodom and Gomorrah, and on the whole inhabitants of the earth, old and young, by a deluge? Might he not, to mark his abhorrence of sin, likewise involve in this visitation, the children, as well as those who were grown up, as he does in other more common visitations? Have not the whole human race forfeited life by sin, in consequence of which, in their successive generations, all are removed by death? And is it not a fact of daily occurrence, that death reigns over children "who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression?" Might not then the Supreme Ruler of the universe justly employ the sword of the Israelites, as well as the plague, or an earthquake, to execute his purpose? Human governments employ the sword of the executioners, and whole armies when it is necessary, either to maintain the authority of their laws, or to assert their rights. And shall men venture to arraign the conduct of the Judge of all the earth, and foster them-

selves in the unbelief of the very existence of his government, because, in executing justice, he acts in a way which even they themselves allow and practise? It should also be remembered, that the Israelites were not commanded to cultivate the principles, and to act from the spirit, of treachery or cruelty; the injunction to them required only the performance of an external act. By the command of God they took away the property and life of those who had no right to either, but what arose solely from the good pleasure of God, of which they were moreover justly deprived, on account of their rebellion and wickedness.

This merited and awful visitation of God on a race of idolaters, with whose aggravated wickedness he had for ages borne with unexampled patience, was calculated, like the former instances of divine vengeance by water and by fire from heaven, and the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, to produce the most salutary and lasting moral effects, not only on the Israelites, and on the surrounding nations, but also on every one who shall hear of it till the end of time. It furnishes, too, a solemn warning to those who, through the forbearance of God, do not experience the just retribution of sin for a season, reminding them that the Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished, and that, though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not escape.

The people of Israel having arrived in Canaan, the service of God, which had been instituted in the wilderness, was more fully regulated and observed; and the tabernacle, with the ark of the testimony, were placed at Shiloh. For a considerable time they were governed by judges, whom God raised up and qualified,

for administering the laws, for defending them from their surrounding enemies, or for delivering them from those nations by whom, on account of their sins, he had suffered them to be subdued. At length, becoming dissatisfied with that form of government which God had appointed over them, and ambitious to increase their consequence and means of defence, the Israelites clamorously demanded of the prophet Samuel, that, like the other nations, they should have a king. Their request was granted, and Saul was chosen, who, at the commencement of his reign, was successful in defeating their enemies; but, towards its termination, having manifested his disregard of God, he was slain in battle, and the kingdom was transferred to David, whom God elevated to be a distinguished type of the Messiah, of whom he was the progenitor.

By means of David, the city of Jerusalem, which had previously been partly inhabited by the Jebusites, became the capital of the kingdom, and was appointed as the place to which the tribes should go up to worship. Thither David brought the ark of God, and prepared materials to erect a temple for its reception; but having been much engaged in war, he was not permitted to build the Temple, that honour being reserved for his son, Solomon. The exact pattern or model after which it was to be constructed, was given to him "by the Spirit," to be communicated to Solomon in writing. David was also employed to complete all that part of the worship of Israel which had not been delivered to Moses, nor could have been observed till this settled habitation was provided for the ark of God.

The Temple was accordingly built by Solomon, who succeeded his father, David; and the whole of the in-

stituted worship of God delivered for that dispensation, was completely regulated. At this time, the promises of temporal good things to Israel were fulfilled in their largest extent. Their prosperity was great under Solomon's reign. The people of the land, who had not before been dispossessed, were entirely subdued, "and Judah and Israel dwelt safely every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beershebah, all the days of Solomon." "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry."

But after Solomon's time, the power of Israel gradually declined. In the reign of Rehoboam, his son, ten of the tribes revolted, so that Judah and Benjamin alone retained their allegiance to the House of David. These two tribes, with the tribe of Levi, which also returned to Rehoboam, were denominated Jews, and continued under the government of the descendants of David, till at length they were subdued and carried captive to Babylon. This captivity appears to have produced the most salutary effect in finally reclaiming the Jews from that tendency to idolatry, through which they had so often been seduced from the worship of the true God, and had brought upon themselves the greatest calamities.

The Jews were restored to their own land by Cyrus; and the Temple, which had been destroyed, was rebuilt. They continued, however, generally to be in subjection to one foreign nation or another, till the advent of Jesus Christ. And it is solely to be ascribed to the special interposition of God, that, during a period of extraordinary convulsion, although the land of Judea lay in the midst of the contending parties, and was often the seat

of war, they were not entirely swallowed up. They were, notwithstanding, preserved amidst all the calamities they experienced from the Babylonians, the Persians, the Macedonians, and at last from the Romans, who successively subdued one another. Every thing that happened to them directly tended to promote the end which God had in view, in separating the people of Israel from the other nations, and to prepare the way for the fulfilment of the promise of salvation, that had been made at the beginning to Adam, and so often renewed. The completion of this great purpose, nothing could prevent; and all those occurrences that appeared calculated to oppose and to thwart it, were overruled, to be entirely subservient to this object, and in the most remarkable manner to contribute to its accomplishment.

Although the historical records of the Old Testament Scriptures were closed above 400 years before the appearance of the Messiah, yet the plan of preparation for that great event continued, as we learn from other sources, to be carried on, in the Providence of God, in a manner the most remarkable. The long captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and the frequent subjugations which they afterwards experienced, were the means of dispersing them through the greater part of the civilized world. In the time of Esther, about 500 years before the coming of Christ, there were Jews scattered throughout the whole Persian empire, from India to Ethiopia. And about 200 years before the same period, many of them were settled in the different countries dependent on Greece and Rome.

After the Babylonish captivity, copies of the Holy Scriptures were greatly multiplied; and in every city where any considerable number of Jews resided, syna-

gogues were erected, in which they assembled, where the law was publicly read every Sabbath day. In connexion with this, the translation of the Scriptures into the Greek language, about sixty years after Alexander's conquests, and nearly 300 years before the Christian era, contributed greatly to make known the expected advent of the Messiah. This translation, which goes by the name of the Septuagint, and which remains to the present day, had become necessary to the Jews, who lived in foreign countries, where the Greek language was spoken, and afterwards, except in Judea, they commonly made use of it in their synagogues. By this means the people of these countries had an opportunity of perusing the Scriptures, and of hearing them read in their own language.

At length, between sixty and seventy years before the appearance of the Messiah, the Romans conquered Judea, and soon after the Roman empire was established in its greatest extent, the nations of the world being united under its government. A direct communication was, in consequence, opened from one country to another. This, together with the erection of the Jewish synagogues, and the general use of the Greek language, tended greatly to facilitate the execution of that commission which the Apostles were afterwards to receive, to "go into all the world, and to preach the gospel to every creature."

One thing more was now ordered in the course of divine Providence, to prepare the way for Him, who was the "desire of all nations." The Roman government, towards the end of the republic, although it had subdued the rest of the world, was itself in a very unsettled state. But about thirty years before the birth of

the Messiah, Augustus Cæsar, having succeeded in putting down his rivals, became the first Roman Emperor. Augustus continued, with some intervals, to be engaged in wars, in subduing his enemies, and in regulating the empire, till that very year in which our Lord Jesus Christ was born, when all was terminated in tranquillity; and, in token of the peace that was then established, which lasted twelve years, the temple of Janus, at Rome, was shut. Thus the world, which had experienced continual convulsions for many hundred years, was, at this important hour, settled in universal tranquillity.

Let us now look back, and observe that remarkable concurrence of circumstances, by which He to whom all his works are known from the beginning, and who ruleth in heaven and in earth, prepared the way for the coming of his Son. The fittest country, as is evident at this day, after all the discoveries in geography, was provided. It is situated in the very centre of the world, and from it the communication is easier and shorter than from any other point, to Europe, to Africa, to the distant parts of Asia, and from thence to America, by the strait where, according to modern discoveries, these two continents nearly meet. A nation was prepared and put in possession of this country, where, under the particular providence of God, and by means of a written revelation of his will, they maintained his worship uncorrupted, when all the other nations of the world had relapsed into idolatry. There they were preserved from being swallowed up by the powerful heathen monarchies that surrounded them, and by which, as a punishment for their sins, they were often overrun.

The world was in the meantime agitated by the most dreadful contentions, and experienced the greatest revolutions, till it was completely subdued by one people, and brought under a government the most powerful and the most civilized that had ever existed. At this time learning and philosophy had risen to their greatest height. "Almost all improvements of the human mind," says Mr Hume, "had reached nearly to their state of perfection about the age of Augustus." A complete trial was therefore made, of what human wisdom and science could effect in discovering the way to happiness, which was the great subject of enquiry among the philosophers. But all of them wandered in the dark, amidst an endless variety of absurd opinions, without being able to come to any satisfactory conclusion on the subject.

After a proof had thus been given of the truth of the declaration that "the world by wisdom knew not God," the time arrived when the Sun of Righteousness was to arise with healing in his wings. That child was now to be born, whose name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of Peace." A general expectation of his appearance was excited, and a universal peace was established, as a proper prelude to his entrance into the world. All that concerned the coming of the Messiah was to be made known in the fullest manner, so as to give every opportunity for the immediate investigation and the future transmission of the testimony of so remarkable an event. "This thing was not done in a corner." That revelation which was to be delivered to mankind of the way which God had provided for them to escape from condemnation and death, and to attain eternal

life, was not to be given in such a manner, that its origin could only be traced to some remote and obscure country, and to some distant and barbarous age. At the end of 4000 years from the creation of the world, it was to be made known in the most cultivated period of Greece and Rome. "It was to originate, as Gibbon has characterised them, "in an age of science and history," and "in a celebrated province of the Roman empire."

Thus we have witnessed a series of events from the first promise given to Adam, in the preservation of one family from the general catastrophe of the flood; in the selection of an individual, highly favoured of God, to whom that promise was renewed; in the separation from other nations of a whole people who descended from him, to whom was delivered a written revelation of the will of God, and in the various unparalleled train of circumstances which marks their history from its commencement; all tending to one point, and all subservient to one grand design.

Having considered the History of the Old Testament Scriptures in the light of that plan of preparation which it records as subservient to the advent of the Messiah, and the introduction of the Christian dispensation, we shall now view it as interweaving in its texture, all the doctrines and duties that are enjoined by the Lord and his Apostles. That this history is designed to convey, along with particular facts, both moral and typical instruction, is a truth not left to the discoveries of human ingenuity; it is the repeated testimony of Apostolic teaching. The facts it records not only adumbrate what was future, but inculcate lessons

both of faith and practice, which exactly correspond with those that are more fully and clearly developed in the New Testament. It is in this latter point of view that we are now to attend to it, reserving till afterwards the consideration of the numerous types which refer more particularly to the Messiah. In both of them the truth of the Apostle's declarations will be manifest, that, "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope;" and that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

At the opening of the History of the Old Testament, the formation of Eve from a rib of Adam is related. This fact teaches all the duties of marriage. It shows that, by the divine appointment, the husband and the wife are one body, every duty resulting from the marriage relation follows as a consequence. That this is the import of the fact, Adam himself understood at the time. "And Adam said, this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." On this principle, the matrimonial duties are inculcated by the Apostle. And it is very remarkable that the force of this divine appointment, constituting husband and wife one flesh, is generally felt, notwithstanding all the corruption of sin. Millions who have no knowledge of this fact, and others who regard not the authority of

God in it, though they are acquainted with the history, feel the influence of this original divine institution. That a man and a woman, strangers to each other during the former part of their lives, should, by entering into the relation of husband and wife, possess feelings of kindred and attachment stronger than those of all the other nearest relations of life, and find themselves in heart, as well as in word, one body, is a fact that cannot be accounted for on any other principle, than the constant working of the divine hand, giving effect to this original constitution.

In this fact, also, we are taught that a man should have but one wife, as well as that the wife should have but one husband. God made but one of each sex at first, which the Lord himself interprets as bearing this import; while an admirable equality in the number of each sex has been preserved by Him in every age and every country. Polygamy, with all its evils, is excluded by the nature of this relation, as seen in the marriage of the first pair. We have here also the most solid refutation of the unholy tenet of celibacy inculcated by the man of sin. Marriage was the appointment of God for man even in the Garden of Eden. How daring then is it to preclude any order of men from this appointment under pretence of greater purity! Whatever advantages, in some points of view, and in certain states of society, celibacy may possess, yet it can never, consistently with the original institution of God, be urged on the ground of greater holiness. Can the holy and honourable nature of this relation be more fully declared than by the fact, that it is a figure of Christ and the Church, and was instituted in the state of innocence at the very formation of man?

The historical relation of the common descent of all mankind from one pair, is eminently calculated, as it was undoubtedly intended from the first, to promote brotherly love among men. To suffer the poor to want is, according to Isaiah, lviii. 7, to hide ourselves from our own flesh. What is better calculated to repress arrogance, pride, and contempt of inferiors in station, than the consideration that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth." Acts, xvii. 26. Even in primitive innocence, the constitution of man taught him humility, as being formed of the dust of the earth, as to his body. The remembrance of this should have kept man humble in Paradise, but as a fallen creature, with the seeds of mortality in him, it teaches the lesson still more forcibly.

From all that we find in the Scriptures respecting the formation of Adam and Eve, it follows, by a necessary consequence, that the redemption of sinners through Jesus Christ, was not a thing planned after the ruin of the human race, or the best expedient of disappointment; but that it was the eternal purpose of Jehovah, intimated in his works, even before sin entered into the world. The incarnation of Jesus Christ, and all its glorious results, were, in the counsels of eternal wisdom, contemplated in the formation of man. Adam, in his representative headship to his posterity, and in the covenant, by the breach of which he and his race were ruined, was a figure of Christ in the redemption of his people. Thus, we see, that "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Throughout eternity there is nothing new to him. In all things he follows the eternal counsels of his own wisdom.

In the murder of Abel by his brother Cain, we have in epitome the history of all the persecutors of Christians—the origin of the hatred of the world towards them, and the vehemence of that hatred overcoming the strongest ties of nature. 1 John, iii. 12.

The destruction of the world by the flood, and the ruin of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven, strikingly represent the destruction of the world at the last day, and the state of things at that period. Matth. xxiv. 38. 2 Peter, ii. 5. Jude, 7.

That God is so very compassionate that he will not execute his threatenings against the wicked, and that it is uncharitable to man, as well as dishonourable to God, to suppose that the bulk of the world are objects of future punishment, is a very general sentiment of mankind. Their chief hope of escaping the vengeance of Divine justice is founded, partly on vague notions of the mercy of God, and partly on the very great number of those who are obnoxious to his displeasure. A great portion of the history of the Old Testament is designed to sweep away these refuges of lies; and of this the history of the flood is a remarkable example. Among all the children of men at that period, there was not found an individual who served God, except in the family of Noah, and even that all of them were spiritual worshippers, does not appear. Let those who brand others as uncharitable, who regulate their opinion on that subject by the word of God, consider this fact. If the world was so generally corrupt in the days of Noah, does charity oblige us to suppose that in our own day, the great body of mankind must be among the heirs of immortality? In the fate, then, of the world at the flood, let men be undeceived as to the

compassion of God. He bears long, but in the end he will punish the impenitent. We see in this fact that God will keep his word, and execute threatened vengeance on all the workers of iniquity. The flood came and swept them all away. Did mercy then interfere to deliver? Mercy spoke by Noah for a hundred and twenty years; but when God arose to execute his threatened judgment, mercy spoke not a word. So shall it be in the end of the world. Mercy now calls aloud, through Jesus Christ, to all sinners, even to the guiltiest of the guilty; but when the time of the execution of threatened punishment shall arrive, mercy will not interpose for their deliverance, more than justice.

The destruction of the nations of Canaan speaks the same language. They were universally corrupt, and were doomed to destruction without mercy. How many plausible things might modern liberality allege to show that these nations should not be viewed in such an uncharitable light! That charity of sentiment, which is so generally approved, would allege that a merciful God would not treat them in the manner represented. Indeed, the justice of the Most High in their punishment has unreservedly been termed cruelty, and as such denounced as unworthy of God. But in the terrible nature of the punishment of these nations, we see God's determination to execute wrath upon the wicked in the most dreadful manner. It is the same God who will execute the judgment denounced against the wicked in the end of the world. In the punishment of the Canaanites, let all despisers of Divine truth behold the God to whom they must give account. Can we believe their vain speculations, teaching that God will not be so severe, when in such

facts we actually behold the most awful specimens of his just severity? Whether was Saul or Samuel more pleasing to God in the case of Agag? 1 Sam. xv. Saul spared Agag, and lost the kingdom of Israel. Samuel hewed him in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal, and received the Divine approbation. Let no man presume to be more merciful than his Maker. Had Saul and Samuel acted from their own impulse and feelings, the conduct of Saul would have been generous, and that of Samuel horrible. But as acting for God, they must not presume to interpose their feelings of compassion. In the condemnation of men and angels, all heaven and earth must say, "thy will be done."

Spurious charity and atheistical liberality may read the same lesson in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain. In them all there were not found ten righteous men. Indeed there is no evidence that there was one besides Lot himself. There was not found a single inhabitant of the city, besides his own household, to accompany him out of Sodom. To his sons-in-law he appeared as one that mocked, even when destruction was hanging over them. Justice poured down upon them fire from heaven, and mercy said nothing in disapprobation. Their country itself was blotted out from under heaven. Shall the number of the wicked, then, or the mercy of the Judge, contrary to justice and truth, interfere to deliver the wicked at the day of judgment? In the fall of the angels and their punishment, and in the accomplishment of God's threatening against the rebellious children of Israel in the wilderness, all hopes are cut off from those who turn away from the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be more profitable for Christians than to

consider these events in the view of warning, excitement, and trust in God. For this express purpose have they been written.

In every page of the history of the Israelites, we may learn how prone the people of God are to unbelief, how speedily backsliding and often gross sin follow it, and how closely chastisement follows sin. In the murmurings and distrust of God exemplified in the wilderness, Christians read their own history, are guarded against unbelief, and put to shame for their backwardness to confide in God. We are thus practically taught that it is an evil thing and bitter to forsake the living God. We blame the Israelites, when, after a thousand deliverances, they are overwhelmed with despair at every new danger, yet we often exemplify the same distrust on less dangerous occasions. We ought to learn a different lesson from the history of God's dealings with his people of old. We should indeed distrust ourselves, but we never can confide too steadfastly in the Lord. Christians give way to sin, but it can never promote their happiness to do so, even though they are assured of impunity as to a future world. Uninterrupted obedience is not only their duty, but it is their earthly advantage. Indeed it would be absurd to suppose that God is the ruler of the world, and that he will give countenance to his children living in disobedience. When they depart from God, they may find gratification in fulfilling the desires of a corrupt mind; yet in such a course they will never find happiness and peace.

In the history of God's dealing with the Israelites, both as a nation and individuals, we have many striking examples of the blessings of obedience and the evil

of disobedience. In rewarding and punishing, in approving and disapproving, we have a constant lesson from facts. The cases of many individuals among the Israelites, as well as that of the nation as a body, is a proof of this. Let Achan, Jacob, and David, serve for examples. How soon did publicity put to shame the secret sins of the first and the last, and how dreadful was the consequence of their transgression! All the labours, difficulties, and trials of Jacob's life, seem to have been the fruit of his dishonourable artifice with respect to his brother. God had appointed him both for the blessing and the birthright; but the Almighty had no need for the wiles of his servant to give execution to his purposes. Even the will of God is not to be brought about by any improper means.

The example of Saul's conduct, and of the Divine punishment which it entailed on him, can never be too much the object of our contemplation. I Samuel, xv. 22, 23. We have here one of the most plausible pretences that are usually made for not fully obeying the Lord, by those who profess to be his servants, and every evasion that ingenuity can invent for apology. But all could not plead his excuse, or reverse the sentence. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry; because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath rejected thee from being king." On the other hand, in Joshua and Caleb, we see the blessing of following the Lord fully. While their companions, in viewing the land, were cut off by the hand of Divine vengeance, they were spared to enter into

the land, in a distinguished manner, with a distinguished inheritance. How instructive is the history of Joseph! It is a history of natural events, yet it is a history of the miracles of Providence, a history in some degree verified in the experience of every Christian. With these facts before our eyes, and with the inspired interpretation of their import in the New Testament as a key, can we be at any loss in applying all the other facts for edification, instruction, correction, warning, or encouragement, according to the intention of each?

From Lot's choice of the well-watered plains, we learn the great evil of preferring temporal to spiritual advantages. How much safer, as well as happier, might he have been in the society of Abraham! In the deliverance of Lot, that righteous man, we see the safety of God's people. But in the choice of his residence among the people of Sodom, in the effects of this on his family, and his escape with the loss of all his worldly goods, we are taught the folly of preferring earthly to spiritual blessings, for ourselves and our children. Abraham, for the sake of peace, gave Lot his choice of the country, and Abraham's family possessed the land for many generations, and their title to it is not yet extinct. At all events, his seed have a promise of yet being called to the blessings of their Messiah. On the other hand, Lot chose for his family a portion among the inhabitants of Sodom, but his house forsook the Lord. He was, indeed, himself a righteous man, but there is not sufficient evidence that there was another in his family that truly served the Lord. Whether or not any of his daughters perished in Sodom, even those of them who went with

him showed abundantly the corrupting effect of the society into which they had been thrown, and his wife was made a monument of disobedience. The Moabites and Ammonites, the two nations descended from him, were distinguished for wickedness and the most cruel idolatries.

That the history of Jacob and Esau, the sons of Isaac, born of the same mother, and at the same time, is designed to teach us practically God's sovereignty in the election of his people, is asserted by inspired interpretation. Rom. ix. 11. Jacob and Esau were twins, whose conception and birth placed them entirely on a level, so that the one had no advantage naturally over the other, except it was that Esau was the first born, and was entitled, on that account, to the right of primogeniture. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." These two individuals, then, were by nature entirely equal, neither of them had done any thing either good or evil, which distinguished them, or gave a preference of the one to the other; they were both equally the creatures of God, equally belonging to the corrupt mass of human nature, and equally unworthy of the love of God on account of their natural depravity. But by his conduct towards them, and the preference he gave to Jacob, God has clearly made it appear that he is the Sovereign Lord of the calling and salvation of men, and of their rejection—that he chooses and rejects such as it seems good to him, without respect to any natural quality that distinguishes one man

from another. No plausible objection can be made to the doctrine of election, that cannot equally be made to this divinely authenticated fact, both as it relates to time and eternity. For if it had been wrong to make such a choice with respect to eternity, it must be wrong to make it with respect to the smallest blessing. If it is justifiable in temporal blessings, it is equally justifiable in eternal. God cannot do a temporal injury more than an eternal. The expression, "Esau have I hated," is sometimes explained as signifying that God loved Esau less than Jacob; but to confute this false interpretation, it is only necessary to turn to the passage in Malachi, to which the Apostle refers, Mal. i. 2, 4, where it will be seen that the awful denunciation on Esau and his descendants there recorded, "against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever," is very different from expressing only a less degree of love to him than to Jacob. Of this, too, any one who traces the account that is given of Esau through the Scriptures, both in the historical and prophetic parts, may soon be convinced. The difference between him and his brother is strikingly marked in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where they are for the last time introduced. Jacob is there referred to as one who lived by faith, while Esau is declared to be a "profane person" (Βεβηλός); the same expression is employed, 1 Tim. i. 9, in the enumeration of the most horrible vices. This historical fact, then, concerning Jacob and Esau, where God declares that he has hated the one and loved the other, and that "the elder shall serve the younger," contains a practical exhibition of no fewer than six fundamental doctrines—the doctrines of the PRESCIENCE, the PROVIDENCE, the SOVEREIGNTY of God, of his PREDESTI-

NATION, ELECTION, and REPROBATION. And the conclusion which the Apostle Paul draws from the whole is this, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." *

That the children of the flesh are not the children of God, and that men become servants of God only by his free sovereign grace, is seen in Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob. Their parentage and extraction were the same. If grace came either by carnal descent, or religious instruction, as a necessary consequence, then Cain, Ishmael, and Esau, would have been as godly as Abel, Isaac, and Jacob. Yet Cain was a murderer of his brother, and a persecutor of him that was born after the Spirit. Ishmael was a mocker of the pretensions of the heir of promise; and Esau was rejected of God, and proved himself to be a mere man of this world, concerned for the temporal blessing, but totally unconcerned for the heavenly inheritance. It is also remarkable that, in each of these examples, God chose the younger in preference to the elder; by this, teaching us that his grace is sovereign, and that on conferring it he has no regard to those things that usually influence the preference of men. What a number of examples does the history of the Old Testament afford us, showing that the children of God are not born by blood, or of the will of the flesh, or the will of man, but of God? How soon did universal corruption appear among the descendants of Adam? How soon was it also manifest among the descendants of Noah? How strikingly was it seen

* The same doctrines are established by the same Apostle, from God's dealings with Pharaoh.

in the descendants of righteous Lot? There are, on the other hand, a multitude of examples to show that God usually blesses the efforts of his people for the conversion of their offspring; but the above facts sufficiently teach, that when God brings the children of the righteous to the knowledge of himself, they are born again by his Spirit, and are not so by carnal descent. Samuel was a child of prayer and a child of God, but how unlike to Samuel were the sons of Samuel! As the case of Samuel is an encouragement to parents, who, like Hannah, devote their children wholly to the Lord, and desire them from him only in the prospect of a heavenly inheritance, so the case of the sons of Eli is a remarkable warning against all unfaithfulness in Christian parents. Eli did not countenance the misconduct of his sons; he did not overlook it when it was reported to him; but he is blamed, because, though he reprov'd, he did not restrain them from their wickedness. Let all Christians take a lesson from this with respect to the extent of their accountability for the misconduct of their children.

The doctrine of the Trinity itself, from the beginning, was intimated in the forms of expression used in the Old Testament; and when we bring the light of the New Testament to bear on this peculiarity of the phraseology of the Old, the discovery of the truth is obvious. No other solution of such a form of expression as that in Gen. i. 26, &c., is satisfactory, but that which shows it to have been from the first the design of the Divine wisdom to couch this truth in the phraseology of the Old Testament. Of the operations of the Spirit of God on the hearts of men, we read in many parts of the Old Testament Scriptures, as also of the

person of the Messiah, both in his Divine and human natures, as the child born, yet the mighty God, as well as of his offices and work. The doctrine of the sovereignty of God is everywhere exhibited, and that of election, as we have seen above, fully taught, while the doctrine of the perseverance of the people of God to the end of their course, is strikingly exemplified in the history of many believers, even amidst the strongest temptations, as in that of David. In the history of Abraham, we read that he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness. Here the necessity of the imputation of the righteousness of God, and the way in which it is received, is taught in a manner so clear, that the Apostle Paul, in the New Testament, when he declares that the revelation of that righteousness is the cause why the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, refers to it and argues from it. Even the resurrection from the dead is taught in the history of the Old Testament, as exemplified in the case of the man who revived when his body touched the bones of Elisha, and is emblematically taught in Abraham's offering up Isaac, and receiving him back as from the dead; and likewise that of a future state, in the translation of Enoch, as has been already noticed, when God took him to himself, and also when God declared to Moses, that he was "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and Jacob," after their departure from this world.

The history of Naaman the Syrian, preaches the gospel in figure in a clear and striking manner. In it we behold the calling of the Gentiles, and are taught that what was so offensive to the Jews, was enveloped in the shadows of their own dispensation. A thing so abhorrent to the feeling of the Jews, so opposed to

their proud and self-righteous notions of themselves, could not have been in their own contemplation ; yet this and many other portions of the Jewish history, distinctly point to the calling of the Gentiles. The leprosy among the Israelites was evidently a representation of the total depravity and spiritual loathsomeness of the sinner, and the rites used in curing it, pointed to the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. Naaman was a leper, and there was in his own country no cure for him. In Israel only can a remedy be found ; so all the nations of the world are covered with the leprosy of sin, and there is no cure for them but by the knowledge of Jesus Christ. They who sin without law, shall perish without law. All in every nation for whom God has provided an inheritance, must have remission of sins through the Saviour of Israel.

In this history of Naaman, we see also the providence of God conveying the information about the Saviour in a way peculiar to himself. A little Israelitish maid was taken captive by the Syrians, and by Divine providence was placed in the house of Naaman. This reminds us of the seemingly accidental circumstances, that afford to the heirs of salvation an opportunity of becoming acquainted with that Gospel by which they are called out of darkness to light, and washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. God had designed to cure Naaman of his leprosy, and for this purpose the Israelitish maid is brought into his family. Christians are here instructed in their duty also, with respect to availing themselves of every opportunity to bring sinners to Christ. It is not the ministers of the Gospel alone, who ought to convey the glad news, but every one who knows it. A little Israelitish maid was here the herald

of salvation to one of the greatest men in Syria. This maid was under no obligation to the Syrians. She was enslaved by them, and torn from her country and relations; yet she evidently desires the good of her master, and conveys to him information with respect to his cure. Christians, then, should desire to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth; and the most obscure of them may have many opportunities of usefulness.

The King of Syria addressed not the prophet, but the King of Israel, in behalf of his servant, and sent much gold and valuable presents. Like Simon Magus, he vainly imagined that the gift of God could be purchased with money, and knew not that if he were "to give his house full of silver and gold," Elisha could not go beyond the word of the Lord to do less or more.

The nature of the cure is the next thing that arrests our attention. Naaman is commanded to wash seven times in the Jordan. Seven is the number of perfection; and the washing in Jordan seven times, most beautifully represents the perfect cleansing effected by the washing of the blood of Christ. There was no virtue in the water itself, or in the number seven; but it was God's appointment, to represent that which had a real value and a real efficacy, the precious blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin.

Naaman was at first angry with the prophet for the apparent insufficiency of the cure. He considered the rivers in his own country better than any in Israel, and expected that the prophet would have come out and called on the name of the Lord his God, and have struck his hand over the place. This is the usual method of procedure with those who use incantations. In how many ways is the gospel corrupted, to make it

more suitable to the wisdom of man, and to make efficacious that which is apparently so weak! All the various ways of making faith a work, are founded on the same view that manifests itself here in Naaman. The simplicity of the Gospel is corrupted, because to wash by faith in the blood of the Saviour appears to human wisdom an insufficient ground of reliance. Had the prophet enjoined some arduous undertaking in order to effect a cure, no doubt, as his servants properly observed, he would have complied. But he is indignant when a remedy is prescribed that is so simple and seemingly unavailing. And in every age since the coming of Christ, even under the name of Christianity, along with the washing in Jordan great things are often enjoined. The efficacy is expected, not from the washing in Jordan, not from the blood of Christ believed in for salvation, but from the things associated with it to give it an efficacy. The mass of the professors of Christianity speak still of the blood of Christ, but their dependence for salvation is in the great things that they do themselves, which supply the deficiencies of the waters of Jordan.

Naaman, however, listened to his faithful servants, and washed, and was cured. Many reject the Gospel at first, who afterwards are, by the mercy of God, brought to believe it. And as soon as they wash in Jordan, their leprosy is cleansed. Faith in the blood of Christ is an instantaneous and effectual cure. Sin is washed away, guilt is pardoned, and the heart is renewed, the same moment in which the Gospel is believed.

The effect of the belief of the truth is seen in Naaman after his cure. He returns, and makes an open

profession of the God of Israel, and renounces all his former gods as vanities. "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." Here we observe nothing of that infidel complaisance that compromises the honour of the Lord, by supposing that God is worshipped by idolatrous nations, and that it is perfectly the same whether it is "Jehovah, Jove, or Lord."

In the conduct of Gehazi, we see a remarkable contrast to that of his master Elisha. The prophet, that he might not appear to sell the gift of God, but to show that it is bestowed without money and without price, positively refused to receive any present from the hand of Naaman when he was cured. This excited the covetous spirit of Gehazi, and in order to possess a part of what his master had refused, he was led to practise the vilest deceit. In this we perceive the corruption of human nature. No example, no teaching, no profession, without the constant agency of the Spirit of God, can preserve us from conduct dishonourable to ourselves, and opposed to the laws of our Divine Master. The corruption of human nature is a fact which the history of the Old Testament is designed strikingly to teach. We see it in all its vileness and abominations in the conduct of the Benjamites—as it respects even the people of God when left to themselves, we see it awfully displayed in David and Solomon. This fact ought to be kept in view, if we would read the Scripture history to advantage.

The Apostolic precept, "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers," 2 Cor. vi. 14, 17, is figuratively enforced in the Old Testament, in the injunction not to sow a vineyard with diverse seeds, or to plough with

an ox and an ass together. Deut. xxii. 9, 11. Even the *new* commandment given by the Lord to his disciples to love one another—although it be only true, in all its fulness and extent, in him and in them, as the Apostle John declares, is shadowed forth in the distinction which the Israelite was taught to observe between his brethren and strangers. Deut. xxiii. 20.

The Old Testament history affords us remarkable representations of the origin, progress, and final overthrow of the Man of Sin. Babylon is so noted a representation of this corrupt system of Christianity, that in the book of Revelation the latter is expressly called by the name of the former. If so, we cannot be wrong when we assert that we discover the traces of the early origin of this apostate Christianity in the building of Babel and the confusion of tongues consequent on that rebellious attempt. We see here not only the extension of the Antichristian system in the vast height of the tower they builded, whose top should reach unto heaven, but also the arresting of its progress in the building being stopped before it arrived at the height proposed by its founders. God shall bring universal confusion on it, and shall destroy it by scattering the builders. But especially in the history of the city of Babylon itself, its persecutions of the people of God, and its signal and final destruction, we have a remarkable representation of the bloody persecutions and destruction of Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth.

That Sodom and Egypt represent that system which, in the New Testament, is described as the city that reigns over the kings of the earth, what is said in Revelation, xi. 8, leaves us no room to doubt. This

great city in which the bodies of the witnesses lie dead, is there spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. The cruelty, persecution, and spiritual tyranny of the system of Popery, are exhibited in the latter; in the former we have an image of its vile abominations, both in manners and religion. Indeed, all the great idolatrous persecuting cities denounced to vengeance in the Old Testament, seem to represent, in different points of view, the same system, all of which are necessary to exhibit it in all its various features. What a striking correspondence do we find between the miracles of the Egyptian enchanters, to oppose the deliverance of the children of Israel, and those of the false church under the New Testament, to prevent the deliverance of the people from the tyranny of Antichrist! Pharaoh and the people of Egypt were hardened in opposition to the command of God by the false miracles or lying wonders of the enchanters. In like manner, there is nothing that so much tends to harden the people in their opposition to the Gospel of Christ, and to confirm them in their allegiance to the great apostasy, as the miracles which Satan pretends to perform through the priests of the Popish Church. Perhaps the best key to what is yet future in the prophecies of the New Testament with respect to the Man of Sin, may be found in the history of that system in the Old Testament. The gradual way in which it has been lowered step by step since it began to decline, corresponds to the fall and decay of the first Babylon. We may look there for information with respect to its total overthrow, from the corresponding parts of its undoubted emblems. As God overthrew Sodom, and delivered his people with a

high hand out of Egypt, after many judgments on Pharaoh's subjects, followed and closed with the overwhelming destruction of all his hosts in the Red Sea, we may look for something corresponding in that anti-type. In the mean time it is pleasing to reflect, that as some of the subjects of Pharaoh feared the word of the Lord, and saved their cattle from the destruction that came on all that despised it, so at present, and probably in the darkest days of Popery, some of those nominally in the kingdom of the beast, have feared the God of Jacob, and found salvation in the blood of the cross. When we contemplate the numbers, strength, and indefatigable never-ending zeal of the votaries of this corrupt system of Christianity, we are apt to be discouraged and overwhelmed with the doubts of success. To oppose it in those countries where it seems to be firmly rooted, appears like an attempt to perform impossibilities. When we turn to the Old Testament, we have innumerable facts to encourage the most confident hopes of its final overthrow. When the Lord was with Jonathan he discomfited and routed hosts of his enemies. Multitudes of similar examples to that of Gideon and others, may be seen in the history of the Israelites.

The abominable idolatries of apostate Christianity, engrafted on the religion of Christ, seem to be pointed out also by the calf of Aaron the high priest. He by no means professed to reject the true God, but purposed to give the people some visible object of worship. The feast appointed for the calf was proclaimed as the feast of the Lord, the God who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt. "These be thy gods, O

Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Exod. xxxii. 4. It was therefore well calculated to pourtray the Antichristian idolatry of the Antichristian high priest, which, with all its extravagancies, professes loudly to be in honour of Jehovah. But like Aaron's calf, it shall, in the end, be reduced to powder, and scattered by the winds of heaven. The calf of Aaron was made in the absence of Moses when he was in the Mount: and the calf of Rome was made after the ascension of Jesus to the hill of God, and will be consumed by the brightness of his coming.

The same thing seems to be intimated in the defection of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, and the establishment of a mixture of the institutions of Moses and the rites of Paganism by that prince. The calves of Dan and Bethel were designed to keep the people from going up to Jerusalem. And are not all the mummeries of Antichrist contrived to keep his votaries from the Gospel of Christ, and the true church of God? There is such an artful mixture of heathenism with Christianity, so much profession of zeal for the true God, conjoined with the idolatry of ancient Rome, that the eyes of men are blinded with respect to its true nature. With all their superstitions and idolatries, Papists, like the Jews of old, cry, "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." As among the ten tribes God had his elect and his prophets, while the kings were universally wicked men, and some of them monsters of iniquity and idolatry, as well as the most cruel persecutors of the church of God; in like manner in the defection of the Antichristian apostasy, God has had his elect, and occasionally some of his ministers,

yet the line of Popes has been as one man pursuing one system, and in all ages wasting the church of God, as well as promoting idolatry.

Let the above serve as specimens of the innumerable facts in the history of the Old Testament, which, by their moral import, invite to the closest study of that part of the sacred volume. Let the Christian reader—dismissing the lax and unscriptural views of the inspiration of the Scriptures which have been too common, and abhorring the idea, founded in gross ignorance, that inspiration was not necessary in the historical parts of Scripture—peruse his Bible with this truth full in view, and the immense variety of facts that he will be enabled to collect, either with the direct stamp of inspired interpretation, from the New Testament, or naturally resolvable by the key afforded in those that are explained there, will excite his astonishment. Nothing is better adapted to correct the errors of those rash and shallow-thinking persons who have presumed to speak slightly of the Old Testament, to discountenance the study of it, and to pay a compliment to one part of the Divine Word at the expense of another. But this view of the subject is not only calculated to raise the Old Testament Scriptures in the esteem of the Christian, it is equally calculated to confirm the truth of Revelation. Though the Christian depends on the interpretation of the New Testament for the assurance of the moral import of the historical facts of the Old, yet the circumstance that a history of such a variety of events, through such a number of ages, should possess a natural capability of a moral interpretation, is itself irrefragable evidence of a Divine Author. This evidence is in-

creased by the consideration, that it is not a random import imposed on it, but that it is one that perfectly coincides with the meaning of the typical ordinances. An uncontrolled fancy might take mysteries out of any history; and uncontrolled fancy has taken fanciful mystical meanings out of the Scriptures, as Origen and some of the Fathers did; but while a proper discernment on this subject will secure the Christian from this abuse of the Bible, it will also prevent the giving any handle to infidelity to bring such a charge. When all such figurative import is to be understood, either by the direct explanation of inspiration, or to be derived by the sober use of the key thus afforded, and always under the sanction of plainly revealed truth, so that no truth or meaning is to be taken from the history that is not expressly and plainly taught in the New Testament, the caprice of fancy can have no place. We should constantly resist that pernicious method of what is called spiritualizing the Scriptures, by the random efforts of an unbridled imagination. This is an error on one side. To despise or neglect the moral and typical instruction of the history of the Old Testament, is an error on the other, against both of which every Christian should strongly protest. The facts of the Old Testament history teach spiritual truth, according to the interpretation of the New Testament. The moral as well as typical import of the facts is perfectly identical with that of the ordinances. This consideration at once secures against error, and confirms the truth of Revelation. If the same import is found in a vast variety of histories or figures, it proves that that import was intended; and if the typical import of a chain of facts, in a history of many genera-

tions, coincides with that of an immense variety of typical ordinances, we have the most satisfactory evidence that the thing is designed, and that the author is God.

The emblematical facts narrated in the Old Testament history, are not only infinitely numerous, corresponding to the typical ordinances, but they form one whole with the utmost exactness and symmetry of parts. All the truths of Revelation are shadowed forth by them. Not one part is useless. All united embody and figure the whole range of Divine truth. In this point of view, is it possible that we can be insensible to the confirmation afforded by this subject to the evidence of Christianity? The study of the Old Testament, in this light, must delight the Christian, and is calculated to convince every candid enquirer, that the Bible is the Word of God. The Old Testament history, throughout a period of some thousand years, written by different hands, and at many different times, not only exhibits a series of events, arranged and exclusively designed to prepare the way for the advent of the Messiah, and the accomplishment of the plan of salvation, but has woven into its very texture all the doctrines and duties of Christianity—doctrines and duties not fully developed nor understood till the coming of Christ, but now to be clearly traced in the ancient records. Can there be a doubt about the Author of the history? It would be as easy to counterfeit the heavens and the earth as to forge such a series of documents. The Bible, then, must be the book of God.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MIRACLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE history which we have been considering, stands connected with a train of miraculous agency, from which it cannot be separated. Miracles are proper and direct proofs of the immediate interposition of God. Those laws by which God conducts the government of the material creation, were originally adjusted, and continue to be carried into effect, by himself; and to suppose, that, without his special permission, any other being can exercise power over them, is to deny the Divine supremacy. Of the truth of the Scriptures there are various other proofs; but that of miracles, wrought to attest the doctrine they contain, is of itself conclusive. Nor can this proof be invalidated by an appeal to other miracles said to be performed, besides those which are related and accounted for by the Scriptures.

There is no reason to believe that any created being, angel or spirit, possesses the power of working a miracle. The laws by which God usually conducts the government of the material creation, from which miracles are a deviation, were originally adjusted by himself, and are still preserved by his providence; and it cannot be supposed that he will give any other being power over them without his own special commission. Not a single miracle in all history, without the record of Scripture, which depends upon good evidence, can be referred to. All the pretended miracles of divination have been uniformly wrought in an age of darkness, or

in a manner that precluded general observation and detection. But why, if they were real, should they shun the light, and never appear in a manner in which their pretensions can be examined?

To the doctrine that nothing but the power of God is adequate to the performance of miracles, the whole Scripture gives its uniform and decided attestation. The Old Testament is wholly constructed on the idea of the unity of God, and of there being no governor of the world but Jehovah only. When Moses wrought miracles in Egypt, God entered into no competition with the gods of the Egyptians, as if they had in reality any existence. Pharaoh did not call in the priests of his gods, but the jugglers, the magicians, and the sorcerers. When Moses turned his rod into a serpent, they appear to have effected only what is commonly done by the jugglers of China at this day, dexterously withdrawing their rods, and substituting serpents in their stead. Bell of Antermony, in the account of his travels, relates, that when he was at the court of China, he was much alarmed by a trick of a similar kind. A juggler threw his cap on the floor, out of which immediately issued a great number of serpents. It was easy in the same manner for the Egyptian magicians to make a small quantity of water assume the appearance of blood, and to produce frogs when the country swarmed with them. Accordingly Pharaoh hardened his heart, not as if he doubted the power of the God of Israel, or supposed that the gods of the Egyptians were stronger than he, but rather, it would seem, because he suspected that there was no miracle in the case, and that Moses was only a more dexterous juggler than those who opposed him. The magicians of Egypt were

countenanced by the king, who wished to retain his Hebrew slaves. Accordingly he resisted the proofs of Moses' commission, even when he wrought miracles which the Egyptian magicians could not imitate, till the darkness and other awful plagues, and at last the decisive judgment of the death of the first-born, convinced the people that the arm of the God of Israel was with Moses.

Moses is so far from ascribing the tricks of the magicians to the invocation and power of demons, or to any superior beings whatever, that he most expressly refers all they did or attempted in imitation of himself, to human artifice and imposture. The original words, which are translated enchantments, do not carry in them any sort of reference to sorcery or magic, or the interposition of any spiritual agents; they import deception and concealment, and ought to have been rendered secret sleights, or juggling. Thus Moses has, in the most direct terms, ascribed every thing done in imitation of the miracles he performed, entirely to the fraudulent contrivances of his opposers.

To Pharaoh, whatever he may have thought of the performances of the magicians, sufficient and paramount evidence was furnished that he was fighting against God. To countervail that evidence, miracles should have been wrought to set aside those of Moses, such as restoring the river to pure water, and removing the swarms of frogs. Till this was done, or at least till miracles of equal power were performed, the evidence of the miracles of Moses remained in full force, notwithstanding that on a small scale an imitation of these was presented; while the swallowing of the serpents of the magicians by the serpent of Moses, evidently

decided the question between them. In addition to all this, miracles of a similar kind were performed by Moses, which the Egyptians could not imitate, and against whose effect they were unable to protect themselves, constraining them to declare to Pharaoh, "this is the finger of God." Pharaoh's persisting then to withstand the attestations he witnessed of Divine interposition, did not proceed from want of evidence, but from rebellious obstinacy, in which he hardened himself by his own devices. In this view, his case was precisely similar to that of Ahab, the rebellious King of Israel, when a lying spirit was allowed to take possession of his prophets to harden him to his destruction. At the same time he also received sufficient intimation of his danger from a true prophet of the Lord. By such examples men are warned not to be "mockers, lest their bands be made strong."

But even supposing that the signs of the Egyptian magicians were real, it would not invalidate the testimony to the truth of the Scriptures afforded by miracles. In that case, power was given to some malignant spirit—as we know was the case in those trials that were brought upon Job—to perform what was done by them, in order to harden Pharaoh's heart. It cannot be maintained that this would have been improper or unjust. Pharaoh could not complain of this, since he was deliberately acting towards the whole nation of Israel in a manner which he knew to be most cruel and unjust, and was wilfully shutting his eyes against evidence of a Divine message delivered to him by Moses, and setting himself to oppose it. It was therefore just to allow him to be caught in his own snare, and to give him up to strong delusion, especially

when a paramount attestation was furnished in the superiority of the miracles of Moses, that he was fighting against God.

Another instance in Scripture respecting miracles, occurs in the case of Saul, when, in the course of his opposition to God, he consulted a woman who was said to be possessed of a familiar spirit. It is not to be imagined that this woman had power to call up Samuel, whom Saul wished to consult, nor does this appear from the narrative. Some, indeed, suppose, that it was the devil who appeared in the likeness of the prophet ; but this is a false interpretation. Before the sorceress could prepare her incantations, by which she was to flatter and soothe the king by the promise of good fortune, the prophet Samuel appeared, and denounced the judgment of death upon Saul and his three sons, because he obeyed not the voice of the Lord. There is no mention here made of the devil. The Scriptures expressly say it was Samuel, and the words he pronounced are perfectly characteristic of that prophet. It is very improbable, too, that had this been the devil, he would have threatened punishment for disobedience to God, and uttered the words of truth. But we are certain that in this case Samuel was sent by God himself, because the message he delivered respected a future event. To foretell what is to take place, is the prerogative only of God. Isaiah, xli. 21, 23, and xlii. 9.

When the priests of Baal were challenged by the prophet Elijah to a trial of power, it was not intended as if God was to enter into any competition with them, but to prove that they could perform no miracle. When by all their prayers, and cuttings, and other rites, from

morning even until noon, and from noon till the time of the evening sacrifice, they could not bring down miraculous fire, and when God, at the prayer of Elijah, sent down his fire upon the altar and consumed the sacrifice, the people were convinced, not that Jehovah was stronger than Baal, but that Baal was in reality no God. They fell upon their faces and exclaimed, "the Lord he is the God."

There is nothing then in the above cases to invalidate the representation uniformly given in Scripture, both of the Old Testament and the New, of the full attestation that miracles afford to the immediate interposition of God. "Rabbi," said Nicodemus, "we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do those miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." To the miracles which he wrought Jesus Christ again and again appealed, as full evidence of his Divine mission, while he declared those to be inexcusable who saw them, and yet did not believe him. "*The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.*" "*If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.*" "*Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake.*" Miracles, then, are the seals of God, by which he ratifies his Covenants with man. They are the proper and direct proof to us of his sovereign commission; and he will not give his glory to another. We may rest in the satisfactory assurance that no created being whatever has power to interfere at pleasure in the course of human affairs, and that the whole train of pretended miracles is false from beginning to end—that the uni-

verse in all its arrangements is still in the hands of its Creator, and that his power only is competent to suspend or control its laws.

The general character of the miracles of the Old Testament is that of facts, plain, palpable, in their nature, at the same time inseparably connected with other facts and histories, and always immediately necessary to the occasion on which they were exhibited. The end to be obtained by them was obvious, and was also generally, previous to their performance, distinctly announced, so that the attention of the beholders was often particularly directed to their progressive and frequently long-protracted completion. The universal deluge, the confusion of the tongues at Babel, and the destruction of the cities of the plain by fire from heaven, were visible and immediate interpositions of God for the punishment of wicked men, different from his usual mode of procedure in the government of the world. The design and tendency of these awful displays of Divine indignation, of the first of which 120 years' warning was given, were of a public and permanent nature, peculiarly adapted to the state of the world, when the knowledge of God was transmitted by oral tradition.

On the separation of Israel, as a nation, from the rest of mankind, a remarkable train of miraculous interpositions, interwoven with their history and laws, commenced. In the wilderness, Moses beheld the burning bush, which was not consumed, and was enabled, with his rod, to work miracles, to convince both his countrymen and Pharaoh, that he was appointed the leader of the people of Israel. When the nation of Israel, under his guidance, at length went

up out of Egypt, a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, preceded their camp. When encompassed by the mountains on each side, and by the army of the Egyptians, the Red Sea, which was before them, divided at the stretching out of the rod of Moses, and opened to the whole multitude a safe passage, while the Egyptians, pursuing them, were overwhelmed by its returning waters. On their way to the promised land, God led them "through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water,"—"a land that was not sown,"—"a land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt." By the daily falling of manna, and by the supply of water that followed them, they were supported, during forty years, in a situation where, without a miracle, so great a multitude of people (computed to have been at that time between two and three millions) could not have subsisted forty days. And from their continuance in the wilderness, these prolonged miracles were not only evident to themselves, but likewise to the surrounding nations.

Soon after they had left Egypt, the law was delivered to them from Mount Sinai. At the foot of the mountain, standing at a distance beyond the reach of any human voice, the whole nation heard the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of God, accompanied with thunder and lightning from the midst of the fire and the cloud, the tokens of the Divine presence. Of this appearance formal intimation was given to them some time before. The whole scene was so awful, that Moses trembled, and the people removed and stood

afar off. The authority of Moses, afterwards employed as their lawgiver, was supported during their journey by miraculous appearances and events on every necessary occasion. When they came out of Egypt, there was not a feeble person among them, so that not one was left behind. And at the end of their journey, Moses, after forty years, could appeal to them that their feet had not swelled, neither had their raiment waxed old. When arrived at the borders of Canaan, and when a supply of food could be obtained in the usual manner, the manna ceased.

On the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan, a way was opened for them to pass through the river Jordan, as they had formerly passed through the Red Sea, of which enduring memorials were set up at the time in presence of the whole nation. And in order to encourage them in the war in which they were about to engage, and to assure them of that Divine assistance which they should experience, the walls of the first city they invested fell down on the blowing of horns. In one of their great battles, their enemies were destroyed by hail-stones poured down upon them; and the sun was stopped in his course for the space of a whole day, that they might be enabled to follow up their victory. Thus in the conquest of Canaan, God wrought four distinguished miracles in their favour;—one in the *water* in Jordan, one on the *earth*, in throwing down the walls of Jericho, one in the *air*, in destroying their enemies with hail, and one in the *heavens*, in stopping the course of the sun and moon. These wonders happening successively in the above order, and in the different parts of the universe, proved the universal power of the God of Israel. Like other

idolaters, the Canaanites acknowledged only particular gods in one or other of the elements, or in certain parts of the world: but these miracles showed them that the God of the Hebrews reigned universally over all—in the water,—in the earth,—in the air,—and in the heavens. Here, too, it may be remarked, that three memorable passages of the Israelites took place by the turning of waters. To open to them a way out of Egypt, the sea was divided. To open to them a way into Canaan, the river Jordan was divided; and to bring them out of Babylon, the waters of the Euphrates were turned from their course. Visible miraculous interpositions were continued long after they came to be established in the land which God had given them as an inheritance. Miracles were likewise wrought among them occasionally in more private instances, and sometimes with signal publicity, as in those performed by their great prophets Elijah and Elisha, the former of whom was, like Enoch, translated to heaven.

Such as has been described being the nature of the miracles wrought among the Israelites, they cannot, it is evident, be separated from the history which records them. Both their character and the relation in which they stand to that history, of which they form so essential a part, mark the total contrariety between them and all pretended miracles, the falsity of which never disturbs the train of those histories in which they are narrated. But either the whole of the history of the Israelites is false, or the accounts of the miracles which it records must be true. If that people passed through the sea, as the history testifies, it must have been by miracle. If they remained forty years in the wilderness, they must have been miracu-

lously fed while there. All the events related in the history depend upon the truth of that public and long-continued miraculous agency, without which they could not have had place. These miracles were recorded at the time when they occurred, and are not only minutely detailed in a way that stamps their authenticity, but are constantly appealed to both in the acts of public government, in the legislation, and in the execution of the laws. Unless the people of Israel had seen and known them to be facts, they never could have been influenced by such appeals.

The whole train of miraculous interposition from the beginning, before there was any written revelation, materially contributed to maintain the knowledge and worship of God in the world. To Israel, as separated from the other nations, it was essential to the circumstances in which they were placed. Miracles were necessary to authenticate the Scriptures as the oracles of God, of which the Israelites were appointed the depositaries. They were also necessary to preserve the nation in subjection to that burdensome ritual, which served at once to restrain them from idolatry, and to shadow forth the good things to come. The spiritual import of their law they might not all comprehend; but it was indispensably requisite that they all should be fully convinced, that its outward form which they received was from God. Without miraculous interposition, the Israelites never would have continued in their state of seclusion, and in that separation from the idolatrous rites of other nations to which they had been accustomed, and to which, being so much suited to the naturally depraved appetites of man, they were all along so prone to

return. And unless they had been convinced, by a series of miracles, and sometimes by immediate and awful visitations, as in the case of Dathan and Abiram, that Moses was a prophet sent from God, they would not have submitted to him as a leader, whose authority, on various occasions, they so reluctantly obeyed. Nothing, then, but that miraculous Providence under which they were placed, could have retained them in obedience, subdued their incredulity, or impressed on their minds a conviction of the Divine origin and nature of that dispensation under which they were placed. But such has been the force of this impression, that all their subsequent trials and dispersions, and all their disappointments, occasioned by the errors they have embraced, have not effaced it to this day. At length, when the purposes intended by miraculous interpositions were accomplished, they became gradually less frequent, till the spirit of prophecy was withdrawn, when they seem to have ceased altogether, not to appear again in Israel till they were renewed by the Messiah himself, in a way better adapted to the genius of that more spiritual dispensation which he introduced, as well as more illustrative of the beneficent nature of the Divine mission of him who came not to condemn the world, but to save it, but in a way equally beyond the utmost stretch of human power.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TYPES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE plan of preparation for the advent of the Messiah, was carried on by different methods, all equally adapted to the grandeur and importance of their object. The commencement may be traced from the manifestation of the dealings of God with individuals, while the progress of the mighty scheme was afterwards more fully developed in the records of Israel as a people, and particularly in the miracles interwoven with their national history. To these was added a series of typical or parabolical representations, by which the work of redemption was shadowed forth and kept in view by a constant and visible appeal to the senses.

A type is a pattern, model, or sign, of another object which it represents beforehand. It is employed in Scripture to denote those acts, circumstances, or events, connected with the Old Testament economy, which prefigured something corresponding that was to take place under the New Testament.* The words, shadow,

* The word type, derived from a Greek word, that signifies to strike, and meaning in its primary sense an impression that something hard makes on another substance, is sometimes used in Scripture for a mark or print, John xx. 25; sometimes for an example or pattern, Phil. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 7; 2 Thess. iii. 9; 1 Tim. iv. 12; Titus, ii. 7; 1 Pet. v. 3; or for an image or similitude, Acts, vii. 43; or summary, Acts, xxiii. 25; and in Romans, vi. 17, for a form or mould; and finally, it is employed in the more appropriate and extensive sense explained above, Acts, vii. 44; Rom. v. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 6 and 11; Heb. viii. 5.

and figure, are likewise used in the same signification. A parable is either a fictitious narrative, employed to convey instruction, in which the instruction or truth is called the moral or mystery ; or it signifies, in the sense in which we are now to consider it, information imbodyed in an action which is designed to represent something distant or future. Thus various institutions and actions were so ordered as to be fit emblems or representations of future events. They were figures which the Divine wisdom ordained with an object so definite and precise as to impose an obligation on men to consider them as such. And hence we discover that in the lives of the memorable characters of the Old Testament, as well as in various striking historical occurrences, particularly in the whole instituted worship of Israel, God was pleased to exhibit a picture or representation of those spiritual things which were to have place under the future economy. In these mystical pictures, God, in a certain measure, developed his future design respecting the mission of his Son into the world, his two natures, his humiliation and exaltation, his death and the value of his sacrifice, his resurrection and ascension to heaven, his intercession, his reign, and his prophetic character, the remission of sins, the sanctification of believers, and in general all that belongs to the economy of grace, and the work of redemption.

The mode of instruction by types and parables, which is still common all over the East, was thus, in the wisdom of God, employed from the beginning, to lead forward the attention of men to truths that were at first only partially revealed. This is analogous to the whole of the Divine procedure, both in the creation and the

government of the world. Nothing is brought to maturity at once. As, therefore, in the natural world, there is first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear; so in respect to spiritual things, God delivered his will, by sundry portions, and in diverse manners, to the fathers by the prophets, before that in the last days he "spake by his Son."

In a type or parable, it is not necessary that every part or circumstance should have its corresponding circumstance, or counterpart, in the antitype or moral. Some things may be introduced into the type or parable to render it complete, which are not material to the truth of what is signified. We are not, for instance, to imagine, when any person or thing is a type of Jesus Christ, that every circumstance relative to that person or thing is typical. Some things, it may be, are peculiar only to the type, some only to the antitype, and others common to both. Solomon, for instance, is proposed in 2 Samuel, vii. as a type of Jesus Christ; but when it is said, "If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men," this relates to Solomon, and not to Christ; when it is said, "I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever," it refers to Christ, and not to Solomon; and when it is added, "He shall build an house for my name," this is applicable to both. Sometimes it is sufficient that there be a faint resemblance in the type of something more excellent in the antitype; that resemblance must indeed at all times be slender when it relates to Jesus Christ, because of the infinite distance between him and the creature. The silence of Scripture, in regard both to the beginning and end of the days of Melchizedec's life, was sufficient to pre-

figure the eternity of Jesus Christ. When the same thing is asserted both of the type and the antitype, it is in a more eminent manner true in the antitype than in the type; so that the truth of the thing in its full import is only to be found in the antitype. Thus we are to explain Heb. i. 5, "To which of the angels said he at any time, thou art my Son"—"I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." Here it is evident that the same was said concerning Solomon, but in such a diminutive sense with respect to him, that when his whole dignity, honour, and grandeur, are compared with what belongs to Jesus Christ, they plainly bear no proportion to it; but it is true in Jesus Christ in so large and extensive an import that his dignity and honour infinitely exceed that of all the angels, and cannot be communicated to any creature. It may further be observed, that a certain variation sometimes takes place with regard to the signification of the type, in so much that, in some respects, it may be applied to Christ, and in others to his church, which is his mystical body. Of this, Abraham's offering up his son is an instance. Isaac, in being ready to suffer death, in obedience to his father and to God, was a type of Christ, in obeying God, his Father, even unto death. But when the ram was offered in the room of Isaac, the figure was changed, and that ram represented Jesus Christ, and Isaac the church which is delivered from death by the sacrifice of Christ.

The great beauty and wisdom of the typical ordinances is their union in one centre, and their mutually contributing to shadow forth the full character, works, and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Each of them has its proper point of reference and illustration, and

no two of them are perfectly coincident. The whole is wanted to represent Christ in all his characters. Jacob and Joseph, Samson and Daniel, and Solomon, are each types of the Messiah, but no two of them represent him in the same point of view. The same may be said of all the types, and the like variety and correspondence is found in the historical facts of Scripture.

Besides a literal meaning, the Jews universally acknowledged, that there was a spiritual sense in their Scriptures. It was accordingly a constant and received opinion among them, that all things in the law of Moses had a mystical or secret meaning. They believed that all that was great or considerable, whether among their ancient priests or patriarchs, was to have its accomplishment in the person of the Messiah. Moses himself, when he said, "God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me," led them to regard himself as a type of the prophet, whom he promised to them. To this mode of figurative instruction, they were habituated by the typical actions performed by the prophets, such as is recorded, Ezek. iv., which represented beforehand certain events in their history. These actions, being regularly verified by their fulfilment, were calculated to produce the strongest confidence in the future accomplishment of whatever was yet only shadowed forth.

As the Jewish and the Christian religions have the same author, and are considered in the Scriptures as essentially the same, the ceremonial economy must have a spirit more noble than its external form. Though the observations of certain unbelievers with respect to the resemblance of the Jewish and Pagan religions, are false and injurious, yet it is perfectly true that the rites

of the Mosaic system are of the same nature with those of the other nations. This is in effect intimated by Scripture itself, when it denominates the ceremonial observances "the elements of the world." If there is nothing in them more excellent than their outward semblance, they possess nothing suitable to the Jehovah of the Scriptures. Looking only at their external nature and their number, they appear trifling and irksome. In the Messiah and his kingdom only have they an interpretation, and a meaning useful, dignified, and important. In him only can they harmonize with Christianity. Assuming this, then, as the spirit of the Jewish ritual, two religions, most opposite in their externals, and most dissimilar in appearance, unite together in a manner calculated to excite our wonder and admiration. This beautiful and unexpected harmony evinces that they are the same in origin, in purpose, and in consummation. It proves that they are one, and that they belong to the same Lord. Every other use, every other reason alleged in justification of the oceans of blood shed in the service of the God of mercy, and the innumerable accompaniments of sacrifice in the worship of the temple, fails in discovering to us wisdom, dignity, and importance suitable to the character of the great I AM. Whatever other purposes these rites might serve, take away their spiritual reference, and a religion is left unworthy of God.

They who take Christ out of the rites of the Old Testament worship, leave in it nothing but a lifeless carcass. Is it, then, a matter of wonder or surprise, that those who see little of Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures, should undervalue the instruction to be derived from every part of them, and that they enter-

tain so low and degrading ideas of their inspiration, even at the very moment when they confess, in a general way, that the Old Testament, as well as the New, is the Word of God? Without acknowledging a spiritual reference it is impossible to derive edification from the ordinances of Jewish worship, and the laws and customs of the Jewish nation. The laws and observances concerning the leprosy, for instance, are full of the most important instruction when regarded as typical; but in every other sense would be degraded to the level of superstitions. In truth, Judaism is not only inconsistent with Christianity in every other view except that in which the one is a figure of the other; but in this way only it is consistent with itself. The unity, spirituality, immensity, omniscience, and omnipresence of Jehovah, are as clearly taught in the Old Testament as in the New. The carnal ordinances, then, the cumbrous ceremonies, the purgation by water and blood, the propitiations by the sacrifice of animals, the never-ending observances of rites not founded in nature, are in themselves palpably unsuited to God, and self-evidently unequal to effect the ostensible end in any other than a typical form. :

The typical import of the Jewish economy, both as a whole and in its several parts, is fully recognised in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul, in alluding to the narratives and the events recorded in the Old Testament, affirms generally, that "*whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope,*" Rom. xv. 4. And referring particularly to their typical import, he says, in relation to what happened to Israel in their journey

from Egypt, and in the wilderness, “*Now these things were our examples*” (literally types), “*to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.*” Afterwards, deducing from them the most important instructions, he adds, “*Now all these things happened to them for examples*” (literally types), “*and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come,*” 1 Cor. x. 6, 11. This proves that these occurrences are not to be regarded as simple conformities of nature, but that they were expressly ordained by Divine wisdom for the purpose which the Apostle declares they were intended to serve. The same Apostle, after having described the ancient tabernacle, Heb. ix., adds these remarkable words: “*The Holy Ghost signifying this, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure*” (literally parable) “*for the time then present.*” Here we see clearly that Paul refers this figure to the institution of the Holy Spirit; and a little after he says, that these things, namely which belonged to the tabernacle, represented the things which are in heaven. In the tenth chapter, he declares that “*the law had a shadow of good things to come*; and in the eighth chapter of the same epistle, that “*the tabernacle was the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle; for see, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern*” (literally type) “*showed to thee in the mount.*” From this it appears evident that God himself had caused the tabernacle to be erected exactly according to the pattern which he had showed to Moses, in order that it might be a figure to

represent heavenly things. We may collect the same truth from the arguments which the Apostle Paul often deduces from the types and figures of the Old Testament, as in Rom. ix. and Gal. iv.—arguments which would have been wholly inconclusive, unless these types had, by a particular dispensation of the providence of God, been really instituted as such, with an obligation on our part to consider them in that light. It is in contrast with these types, that Paul affirms that Jesus Christ had been evidently set before the Galatians crucified, and that we with unveiled face behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord.

It is admitted that, in the Scriptures, there are many things which are compared with Jesus Christ, without, however, being, properly speaking, types, instituted with a particular design by the wisdom of God. Their comparison simply arises out of the conformity which subsists between them and Jesus Christ. Thus, for instance, he is called a *door*, a *vine*, a *foundation*, a *corner stone*, without our being led to conclude that the doors, the vines, the foundations, and the corner stones, are types properly so called. These are arbitrary images, which are so only by the conformity which subsists between them and Jesus Christ. But it is equally clear that there are figurative representations in the Old Testament, which the wisdom of God has employed with a precise and particular design, appointing them as typical of him, and laying men under the obligation of considering them in that light, according both to the settled opinion of the Jews, and the express testimony of the Apostles. By these means, God saw it good to nourish the hope and consolation of ancient believers, thus directing their attention to

the Messiah to come, and confirming them in the assurance that he would at length be manifested. And he intended also, that, under the new dispensation, his people, by comparing these things with Jesus Christ manifested, and with the different parts of his salvation, should recognise that he is indeed that Messiah whom the wisdom of God had in ancient times prefigured, when they discern so admirable a resemblance between him and all these shadows. As there cannot be too many ways opened by which to come to a clear and full understanding of himself, God has been pleased to join this way to others, in order that we may advance more and more in the knowledge of the truth of Jesus Christ our Lord, who is the sum of truth, so that, entering by many different ways into our hearts and thoughts, he should make on them a more profound impression. In addition to this, of all the means by which we can attain to the knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, there is not one which bears a greater accordance to the human understanding than typical representation; for the different resemblances and beautiful analogies which we discover between the Lord Jesus Christ and his types, have not only something in them that is both most natural and agreeable, but something also which fixes the attention much more than those simple objects, the consideration of which does not admit of comparison.

We must not, however, imagine, that the ancient believers understood exactly all the resemblances between these figurative representations and the Saviour. Their knowledge being very obscure respecting the person, the natures, the qualities, the different states, the actions and the works of the Messiah, they could

not see these resemblances or conformities very distinctly. They had, however, sufficient knowledge of them to support their faith, to minister to their consolation, to animate their hope, and to conduct them to salvation. In regard to New Testament worshippers, these figures are indeed abolished as to the practice, but not as to the contemplation of them, or the fruits which result from that contemplation. They are abolished as to practice ; for it is not now permitted to Christians to celebrate the new moons, the feasts, and the Sabbaths, to present sacrifices, or to observe the ancient ceremonies of the Jews. All these things have been buried in the grave of Jesus Christ, and when he came forth from it, he left them there for ever. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, strenuously opposes the false teachers, who wished to bring back the observance of the legal ceremonies, and to connect them with the gospel. And in his Epistle to the Colossians, he says, "*Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days ; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.*" But these types, or ancient figures, are still of use to us ; for it is certain that we are required, in the reading of the Old Testament, to consider these admirable representations of his Son, which God has placed there, to examine all their relations, and to make use of them for our instruction and edification. We are no longer called to eat unleavened bread, or to immolate the paschal lamb ; but we have to consider in the figure of that lamb, the perfection of Him who is the true Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world ; and in the figure of unleavened bread, we have

to recognise Christian sincerity and truth, of which that institution was only the image. We may even say, that in this respect the ancient figures were rather made for us than for the Israelites, since it is certain that of these we possess a far clearer understanding than they could possibly have.

It is not only lawful, then, but our incumbent duty, to ascertain the meaning of the types of the Old Testament. And it must not be supposed, that either an infallible authority is necessary to explain these types, or that all the types of the Old Testament are explained in the New. For why should an infallible authority be required in interpreting the types rather than in interpreting the prophecies? It is manifest that it was the will of God to instruct us by types, and the explanation of the types is now far more easy, on account of the distinct knowledge of the Antitype, than of many prophecies. And why should we believe that all the types of Jesus Christ were explained, rather than all the prophecies concerning him, especially as the apostle affirms, that he has not spoken particularly of them all? Heb. ix. 5.

Types may be divided into different classes; some are natural, some are personal, some are local, some are legal, and others historical. In nature, all the works of the universe, which God has drawn from the treasures of his wisdom, of his goodness, and his power, have been a type of that other great work in the Church, which God has done, and which he still does, and will do, even till the consummation of all things. For this reason the work of grace is in Scripture called *a new heaven and a new earth*; and Paul says, that *“we are the workmanship of God created unto good*

works.” Between these two works there are different points of resemblance. Both the one and the other proceed from the good pleasure of God. Both are mirrors in which God has been pleased to reflect his glories. They are each of them the admirable work of his wisdom and power, to which no creature can attain; and as no one but God could make the world and the Church, so there was nothing that could resist or prevent the accomplishment of his purpose. We may find typical resemblances in the most illustrious parts of the universe—in the sun the type of Jesus Christ—in the moon that of the Church. Light is to us an image of truth, of holiness, of the joy which grace imparts. Darkness, or night, on the contrary, represents the ignorance, the error, the disorder, the guilt, the fear of punishment in which believers lived during their sinful state.

The creation of the heavens and the earth is a figure of the new and spiritual creation. The first was the work of God’s power, his wisdom, his goodness; but the second is that of his mercy, and all his other perfections. The first consisted in things material and earthly, the second of things spiritual and heavenly. The six days which God employed in that work, and the seventh in which he rested, represent the time that he employs in the construction of his Church; and the great and eternal rest into which she will enter, when he shall have finished his work. That the Sabbath, appointed to commemorate the finishing of the work of creation in six days, had also a farther reference, symbolically, to the eternal rest that Jesus Christ, by his work in the flesh, should prepare for his people, is the doctrine of the New Testament. All

Sabbatical institutions had this as their ultimate object. Heb. iv. 1—11. And as the first day of the week has taken place of the seventh, in honour of the resurrection of Christ, so the rest of Jesus Christ from his work of redemption was contemplated prospectively in the first Sabbath. Thus we see that man was not designed in his creation for happiness in this world through eternity ; but that, in the counsels of Jehovah, the “election” was, from the first, destined to an inconceivably higher state. They were made for happiness in that eternal Sabbath which, through Jesus Christ, remains for the people of God. Infidel geologists, and, to their shame, some professing Christians, following in this instance the wisdom of the world, have supposed that the six days of the creation do not denote exactly the portion of time which is generally understood by that expression, and that the world is, or may be, older than we are taught by the pen of inspiration to believe. This they judge to be necessary, in order to account for certain natural appearances. But even in creation, God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world.

Under the Old Testament dispensation, PERSONS, OFFICES, OBJECTS and APPEARANCES, PLACES, INSTITUTIONS of WORSHIP, EVENTS, and almost all things recorded in the ancient Scriptures, were typical signs of the Messiah, of his kingdom and salvation. The following are a few examples, out of multitudes that might be produced.

The first man who was taken from the dust of the earth, and into whom God breathed the breath of life, was a type of the second man, who is the Lord from heaven, into whom God has also put not only a

living soul, but the fulness of the Holy Spirit. This name, "the second man from heaven," which is taken from the comparison with the first man in nature, includes the idea of a new creation, which God in his grace had designed to produce. It supposes the resemblance which exists betwixt Adam and Jesus Christ. Adam was created in the image of God, in perfect holiness and righteousness; Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. The lordship of Adam over all the animals, is a figure of the universal dominion of Jesus Christ as mediator. And, as it was in their communion with the first Adam that God blessed all creatures, so it is in the communion of Jesus Christ that God blesses all believers. The first Adam had his paradise on earth, which was provided for him and his descendants; the second Adam has his paradise in heaven, elevated above all things both for himself and his children. The first man received the human nature, and all its blessings, not for himself alone, but for the transmission of them to others. Jesus Christ has not received for himself alone the blessings of grace; he received them that his people might obtain all from his fulness.

The above name, "the second man from heaven," also includes the differences which may be found between Adam and Jesus Christ, such as that Adam could only communicate an earthly life and animal nature, in place of which, Jesus Christ communicates one that is celestial and divine. Adam communicated a nature which was mutable and mortal, Jesus Christ one that is immortal and immutable. This is remarked by Paul, not only when he gives the title of celestial to Jesus

Christ, but principally when he says, that "the first man Adam was made a living soul;" viz. that he might convey natural life to those who had not received it; but "the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," viz. that he might impart spiritual life to them who had lost it. The soul of man can communicate life to the body if it be united to it, but it cannot of itself form this union, far less unite itself when detached from it. But the quickening spirit has this virtue, that it not only communicates spiritual life to the soul, but unites the soul to the body after their separation. Thus Jesus Christ raised up himself, and quickens, and will raise up all believers. The living soul, then, simply signifies a life, but that quickening spirit denotes an immortal life, which repels and overcomes death. As Adam was not considered as an individual person, but as the federal head and representative of all his natural posterity, to whom his actions, while he retained that character, were imputed; so Jesus Christ was not considered in what he did and suffered as an individual person, but as the federal head and representative of all his spiritual posterity. The one was the head of all men in nature, the other is the head of all believers in grace.

As there are points of resemblance between the two Adams, so there are also points of opposition. The first was, even in his fall, a type of the last. As the first Adam was a principle of death to all his posterity, so the second Adam is a principle of life to all who spring from him. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." In the first, believers are dead—in the second, they revive. In the first, their nature is corrupted—in the second it is restored.

In the first, they were degraded, the bond slaves of Satan and of sin ; in the second, they have been brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. In the one they became the enemies of God ; in the other, they are reconciled, and made his children and friends. By the one came sin, condemnation, and death ; by the other came righteousness, justification, and life. The first Adam was so far from being able to transmit life and happiness to his posterity, or to give them to eat of the tree of life, that himself was driven out from the terrestrial paradise, and from all access to that life-giving tree. But the second Adam confers on his posterity a heavenly inheritance, and declares, that to him that overcometh, he will give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Thus, as Jesus Christ is the head and representative of all who from him derive spiritual life, so Adam, who was the head and representative of all who derive from him natural life, was “ the figure (literally, type) of him that was to come.” Rom. v. 14.

EVE, who was taken from the side of Adam while asleep, represented the church which is taken from the side of Jesus Christ when dying, from which flowed blood and water, by which he was to sanctify and cleanse, and to present to himself his church. The marriage of Adam with his wife was the image of the mystical union of Jesus Christ with his church, which is called the Lamb’s Wife. Rev. xix. 7. As the Apostle Paul, in Romans v. and I Corinthians, xv., marks the conformity between Adam and Jesus Christ, and reasons from the one to the other, so, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he employs the marriage of the man with the woman, which is an institution of the first

creation, as a type of the marriage and mystical communion which subsists between Jesus Christ and his church. The Apostle not only illustrates the duties of the one relation by those of the other, but expressly affirms that marriage is a "mystery," or a figure of the union of Christ and believers. As Adam said of Eve, that she was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, so the Apostle affirms, with respect to Jesus Christ and his people, that they are "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eph. v. 31, 32.

ABEL, whose name signifies vanity and emptiness, was a type of Jesus Christ, who "made himself of no reputation;" literally, emptied himself, Phil. ii. 7, when assuming the nature of man, who is "like unto vanity," Psalm lxii. 9. In offering an acceptable sacrifice, and in his death, which Abel suffered by the hands of his brother Cain, who slew him because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous, he was a type of Jesus Christ in the bloody sacrifice which he offered, and in his death which he suffered by the hands of wicked men of his own nation, who hated him because of his holy life and doctrine. The mark which was set on Cain on account of the murder of his brother, and his being driven out as a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, furnishes a most remarkable representation of the state of the Jews at this very day, who were the murderers of Jesus Christ, and on this account are a proverb and a by-word, "driven out" from their country, and scattered as vagabonds all over the world. God, too, declared that Cain should not be killed, and he has not suffered the Jews to be exterminated. The blood of Jesus

Christ which they shed, calls aloud for the vengeance which they imprecated on themselves and their posterity, as the blood of Abel did against Cain, though in other respects the blood of Christ speaks better things than that of Abel.

ENOCH was a type of Jesus Christ in his state of exaltation, as Abel was a type of him in his state of humiliation. Enoch, who was the seventh from Adam, was, in his translation, a type of Jesus Christ, in his ascension to heaven, who was the seventieth from Enoch. Enoch, who "had this testimony, that he pleased God," was the third person that we read of who departed out of this world, and was taken up to God; Christ was the third person who ascended to heaven, in whom God declared that he was "well pleased."

NOAH was a type of Jesus Christ. His name signifies rest; and of him it was said, "*This same shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.*" In like manner, Jesus Christ promises rest to all who labour and are heavy laden, that come to him, and comforts them by redeeming them from the curse which God has pronounced on all who have broken his law, as those who came to Noah were comforted and rescued from the curse inflicted on the ground by the destruction of the flood. Noah was a preacher of righteousness to the world—the righteousness of Christ. Jesus Christ was a preacher of the same righteousness "in the great congregation." Ps. xl. 9. Noah prepared an ark, by which he saved his family, while the rest of the world perished in the flood. Of Jesus Christ, it is said, "A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from

the tempest." He saves all the children whom God hath given him, while the Lord shall swallow up in his wrath all the rest of the world. As the antediluvian world would not listen to the preaching of Noah, so the ungodly world refuses to attend to the preaching of Jesus Christ. Noah was the head of the new world, Jesus Christ is the head of the new creation. Noah "buildded an altar, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar, and the Lord smelled a sweet savour;" and Jesus Christ "hath given himself an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour." God made a covenant with Noah and his seed, by which he engaged that there should not be any more a flood to destroy the earth. God made a covenant with Jesus Christ, which shall stand fast with him, and whose seed he will make to endure for evermore. God gave the rainbow in the cloud to Noah as a token of his covenant, and Jesus Christ, with whom God made the everlasting covenant, appears as the mighty angel clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow upon his head. Rev. x. 1.

The ark which Noah built was also a type of Jesus Christ. As the ark secured all who entered into it from the descending rains and the overflowing flood, so Jesus Christ gives a secure refuge from the wrath that is to come to all who fly to him, for to them who are *in* Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. As the ark was despised by the antediluvian world, who were hardened to their destruction, so the glad tidings of salvation, which men are called to seek for only in Christ, are to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness. The dove which Noah sent out, and which returned with the olive leaf plucked off,

was a type of the Holy Spirit, which descended upon Christ when he was baptized in Jordan. And as that dove brought the olive branch to those who were in the ark, from which they might know that the waters were dried up; so in like manner the Holy Spirit assures those who are in Christ of the peace of God, the symbol of which was the olive branch. For all who entered into the ark there was room, and all of them were saved from the deluge, in which the rest of the world perished. In like manner, all who come to Christ he will receive, and all of them shall be saved, in the day of the wrath of God, when "the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place."

MELCHIZEDEC, who was King of Salem, and also priest of the Most High God, is the first in Scripture who is called a priest. He was an early and very remarkable type of Jesus Christ, both in his priestly and kingly office. He was first "by an interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is king of peace." In both these respects, and in the same order, he represented Jesus Christ, who, by way of eminence, is called "the righteous," who brought in "everlasting righteousness," and who works in his people a sanctifying righteousness by the power of his Spirit, on whose appearance "peace" was proclaimed on earth, and who is his people's peace, because he gives them peace as the fruit of righteousness.

No other but Melchizedec ever united the priestly and kingly offices, but he was both King of Salem and priest of the Most High God, and thus was an eminent type of him, of whom it was said, "he shall bear the

glory, and he shall be a *priest* upon his *throne*." In the 110th Psalm, where David is addressing the Messiah, he says, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec." The priesthood of the tribe of Levi was an eminent type of the priesthood of the Messiah. But as it was at length to be superseded, it could not represent his priesthood in respect of duration; and probably to signify its limited period, an accurate genealogy, which was kept till the coming of Christ, was indispensable to it.* But the genealogy, the birth, and the death of Melchizedec, are all omitted, in order that, appearing in the history without father, without mother, without beginning of days or end of years, he might more perfectly represent *Him* who is from eternity, and of whose priesthood and government there shall be no end. The circumstance that the Levitical priesthood should be set aside, which, as it was of Divine appointment, was essential to the instalment of Messiah in his office, was thus early intimated in the case of Melchizedec. While the circumstance that the order of Melchizedec's priesthood should be permanent, was plainly declared, as above, by David, King of Israel, at a time when the priest-

* Owing to the genealogy being indispensable to the Levitical priesthood, an important purpose was served, when after the coming of the Messiah, and the destruction of Jerusalem, it was irrevocably lost; as not only by the destruction of the temple, the place in which alone the legal sacrifices could be offered, but also by the loss of the sacerdotal genealogy, it became absolutely impracticable to continue the legal sacrifices—an end to which the prophet Daniel had predicted was to take place at the death of the Messiah.

hood of the tribe of Levi subsisted in all its dignity. The priesthood of Melchizedec was to be exhibited as superior to that of the tribe of Levi; and to him, therefore, even Levi paid tithes in the person of Abraham, his progenitor, from whom, when returning from the slaughter of the kings, Melchizedec received the tenth part of his spoils; when Abraham, as the less, was blessed by Melchizedec. On that occasion, when these two priesthoods met, the imperfection of the legal priesthood which communicated no real blessing, but on the contrary needed to receive one, was on the one hand pointed out, and on the other, the perfection of the priesthood of Jesus Christ which truly blesses; for it was Jesus Christ, represented in the type of Melchizedec, who, in blessing Abraham, declared himself far elevated above the priesthood of Levi, and showed that all the blessing which belonged to it was derived from what he communicated. Thus the law, as a servile covenant, was made to do homage to the gospel, and a figurative and temporary priesthood to one which is true and eternal. To Abraham, also, and his followers, Melchizedec, the priest of the Most High God, brought forth bread and wine, which, as the emblems of that spiritual food, the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, provided for the life of the world, are now permanently appointed by the true king and high priest of their profession, to nourish and refresh his followers. Melchizedec being a priest of the Gentiles, intimated that the priesthood of the Messiah should not be confined to the nation of Israel, as that of Levi was.

Finally, the priesthood of Melchizedec particularly represents the acts of his priesthood which Jesus Christ

exercises not on earth but in heaven. For that part of his priesthood which consisted in his humiliation, was represented in the type of Aaron, and not in that of Melchizedec; this last type regarding that other part which consists in his exaltation. His being called *a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec*, signifies two things—the one that he must perform celestial and continual acts of priesthood, and the other that his priesthood must be conjoined with the glory of majesty and royal dignity. But as neither the one nor the other of these two things could be found in the first part of his priesthood, namely, in that part which he executed on earth, it was necessary that to this first part a second should succeed, in which both these divine characters are found—the one of eternity, the other of royalty. And consequently it was necessary, that after having offered his sacrifice on earth, he should ascend to heaven, there to appear before the eternal Father, and there to be seated at his right hand to intercede for his people.

ABRAHAM was the progenitor and an eminent type of Jesus Christ. He was *chosen* by God, and was called his “friend.” He was a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth, yet he overcame kings. God made a covenant with him, and promised to him a seed numerous as the stars of heaven, constituting him the father of many nations, which he fulfilled, but not till after his body was dead. Rom. iv. 17, 19. He gave him also the land of Canaan, of which, however, he was not to put him in possession during his life, nor to give it to his posterity till long after his death, and he made him the heir of the world. In all these respects, he was a type of the Messiah. Jesus Christ is the *elect*

of God in whom his soul "delighteth," Isaiah, xlii. 1. He is "the everlasting Father of all believers, who are the children whom God hath given him, of whom he is the pattern and example; and he is declared to be the heir of all things. At the call of God he left heaven, his original country, and his father's house, and came and sojourned in this world, in which he was "a stranger to his brethren and an alien to his mother's children," yet he was made "higher than the kings of the earth." God made a covenant which "shall stand fast with him," by which, but only in consequence of his death, Isa. liii. 10, he engages to give him a posterity numerous as the drops of dew from the womb of the morning; and he gave to him "the promise of eternal inheritance" in the heavenly country, which, however, he was not to put him in possession of before his death, nor to give it to his seed till a long time after. In all these and other particulars, a very striking representation, in the person of Abraham, was given of the Messiah, who, till after many ages, was not to appear in the world.

The covenant which God made with Abraham, of which circumcision was the sign, in virtue of which he promised him the land of Canaan, was a type of the evangelical covenant. For as God was not induced to make that covenant but of his own good pleasure, and as he made choice of Abraham, among all men, solely by grace to honour him with it, so the gospel is the fruit of the good pleasure of God, and the elect to whom God communicates it, are chosen solely by grace. This covenant was founded and executed in Isaac. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." In like manner, the gospel is founded solely in Jesus Christ,

of whom Isaac was a type. The land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey, which is represented in Scripture as a land extremely delightful, was promised to Abraham, so that the right which he and his posterity had to it, was entirely founded on the gratuitous promise of God. In like manner heaven, the eternal inheritance, which the temporal Canaan represented, is prepared for his people, by the promise and from the free grace of God, to which all the right they have to it must be referred. This covenant with Abraham is to be viewed in two aspects, first as a prophecy, secondly as a type. As a prophecy, because in it God promised the Messiah, and all that is contained in his economy. But because in the same promises of God to Abraham, there were two covenants included, the one the legal, and the other the evangelical, and as the legal was the figure of the evangelical, the covenant made with Abraham must also be considered as a type.

Abraham had two wives, Sarah and Hagar—Sarah the freewoman, and Hagar the bondwoman. Of Hagar he had a son, born according to nature. Of Sarah he had Isaac, born by a supernatural principle, in the order of the promise, and according to the good pleasure of God. Ishmael, born according to the flesh, that is, according to the principles of nature, was a slave, and banished from his father's house. Isaac, on the contrary, born according to a supernatural principle, and of a free mother, was heir of the house and of the goods of Abraham. These things, says the Apostle Paul, are an allegory, that is to say, that they are to be considered as types. "For," he adds, "these are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth

to bondage, which is Agar." These two wives of Abraham, then, are the figure of two covenants which God made with man, viz. of the law and the gospel. The gospel is the free covenant, which was made for its own sake, and not to be subservient to another covenant. The law, on the contrary, is the servile covenant, which was made only for the purpose of being subservient to the gospel. "The law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ;" the object and end of that covenant being to be fulfilled in the Redeemer, and to dispose men to receive the gospel. Both covenants produced children. The law naturally engendered those who, seeking to obtain life and eternal happiness by the way of their works, have a servile and mercenary spirit. The gospel, on the contrary, begets true believers, who, renouncing the way of works, and embracing that of faith, in order to obtain salvation from the paternal mercy of God, have a character more noble and more elevated than the other. These last are therefore animated with the spirit of adoption, while the others have the spirit of bondage. The first are born according to the principles of nature, for the manner in which they seek to establish their righteousness and their hope, namely, that in doing the things that God commands in his law, they will obtain eternal life, is a principle of nature. But believers are born on a supernatural principle, which is the promise of mercy and of grace, that God vouchsafes to all those who believe in him, and in Jesus Christ, his Son. The consequences to the two wives and the two children of Abraham were very different, as their condition also was. For Hagar was banished from the house of Abraham, and Ishmael had no part of his heritage; accord-

ing to that which was said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son ; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." There is the same difference between the law and its self-justifying children, on one side, and the gospel with believers on the other. The law has been banished from the house of God, to be no longer a covenant ; and the self-justifiers have no part in the heavenly inheritance. But the gospel remains an everlasting covenant ; and believers are the true heirs, the true children to whom God gives his blessings, not in the way of what is due, as the self-justifiers pretend that they are to obtain them, but in the way of promise ; that is to say, of a free gift, and as an inheritance.

The sacrifice of ISAAC, whom Abraham designed to offer on Mount Moriah, was a type of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, in which the Eternal Father delivered his own Son to death. As Isaac was promised long before he was born, whence he is called the son of the promise, Gal. iv. 23, so Jesus Christ was the Seed promised from the foundation of the world. As Isaac was not a child of the flesh, but of promise, Rom. ix., by supernatural and Divine power, of a woman both naturally and by reason of her age barren, so Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, not according to the order of nature, nor by virtue of the blessing, increase and multiply, but by the supernatural and miraculous power of the Holy Spirit ; and the nativity of both was announced by an angel. As Isaac voluntarily, and without murmuring, obeyed his father, who designed to offer him as a sacrifice to God, so Jesus Christ was obedient unto death, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. As Isaac carried

the wood on which he was to be offered, so Jesus Christ bore his cross. As there were three days from the commandment given to Abraham to offer his son, during which he esteemed him to be dead, until his deliverance, so there were three days from the death of Jesus Christ until his resurrection. The mountain that God chose for the sacrifice of Isaac, was the same on which Jesus Christ, 2000 years afterwards, was offered.

It was in Isaac that God gave the first figure and demonstration of the necessity of a human victim for the expiation of sin; for as it was man that had sinned, it must be by man, and not by the sacrifice of beasts, that justice was to be satisfied. On that account, the Son of God, in coming into the world, is represented as saying, "Sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings, and offering for sin, thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein (which are offered by the law); then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." No sacrifice could be a more express figure of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ than that of Isaac. Although Isaac was not actually put to death, yet he was considered by his father to be so during the three days of their journey; and he was as already dead, when the Angel arrested the deadly blow; so that in this deliverance he was received from the dead in a figure, Heb. xi. 19, and, therefore, was a type of Jesus Christ, who was gloriously restored from death. Thus, the sacrifice of Isaac is a type both of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, of whom it is said, that God raised him up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of it. And as Isaac was the head and heir of the family of Abraham, so Jesus Christ is established heir of all

things by God his father, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, and the first born of many brethren. As Isaac, restored to life, has begotten a posterity numerous as the stars of heaven, and as the sand on the sea-shore, so Jesus Christ, by his resurrection, has obtained a life, by which he hath begotten to God an innumerable multitude of believers, according as it was predicted by Isaiah, that after he should make his soul an offering for sin, he should see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand. When Abraham, therefore, prepared to offer his only son Isaac in sacrifice to God, and afterwards received him back in a figure, as if he had been raised from the dead, he was unconsciously exhibiting an emblematical representation of the sacrifice and death of the only begotten Son of God, who was ordained by the will of the everlasting Father, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and of his resurrection from the dead, for the redemption of sinners.

JACOB was in various respects a type of the Messiah, and to him was given the promise of the land of Canaan, as formerly it had been given to Abraham and to Isaac. He was appointed the father of Israel after the flesh, that nation which was typically the people of God, and separated from the other nations of the world. From him sprung the twelve patriarchs, who were the fathers of that holy nation. In his trials and afflictions, and during his whole life, he was a pilgrim and a stranger, without any permanent dwelling-place. In all these particulars, he prefigured Jesus Christ,—who was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,—who had not where to lay his head,—to whom the promise of the eternal inheritance was given,—who is “the

Everlasting Father” of his people Israel after the spirit, separated from all others, of whom the twelve Apostles, whom he appointed, are the spiritual fathers. In wrestling with the Angel, with whom he had power and prevailed, and to whom he wept and made supplication, Jacob represented him, who, in the days of his flesh, “offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.” Jacob became a servant in the house of Laban, and submitted to many hardships to obtain in marriage his beloved Rachel; and “Christ also loved the Church,” and, in the view of betrothing her to himself, “took on him the form of a servant,” at a distance from his father’s house, and endured many troubles. Jacob was brought up out of Egypt; and of Jesus Christ, it was said, “out of Egypt have I called my son.” Jacob left the world blessing the children, of whom, he said to Esau, that they were the children which God had graciously given him; and Jesus Christ, in like manner, left the world blessing those, of whom he declared, that they were given to him by God.

JOSEPH, the son of Jacob, was an eminent type of Jesus Christ. He was called “the shepherd, the stone of Israel.” He was the first born of Rachel—the beloved son of his father—a goodly person—and a man in whom the Spirit of God was—an interpreter of dreams. He was sent by his father to seek his “brethren” in the wilderness. He was hated by them, and cast into a pit, and sold, according to the proposal of Judah or Judas, for a small price. He was tempted, but resisted the tempter. He was falsely accused, and cast into prison with two noted criminals, the one of

whom he adjudged to death, and the other to life. From prison he was brought out and elevated to be ruler over all the land of Egypt, with so much power and glory, that Pharaoh, in presenting him to the people, and giving him a name, caused it to be proclaimed that all should bow the knee before him. He saved the lives of his brethren by providing food for them, while he rejected the money they brought to purchase it. Although he dealt hardly with them at first, he brought them at length into that fertile land to which God sent him before them, to save them by a great deliverance. There they sat with him at his table, they did eat and drink with him, and partook with him in his prosperity and glory.

In all the above particulars, Joseph was a type of Jesus Christ, who was the first born,—the beloved Son of God. He was fairer than the sons of men, and grace was poured into his lips. He alone hath revealed the secret counsels of God, and prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. He is the shepherd of Israel, and the chief corner stone. He was sent by his father to seek those who were lost. His own countrymen hated him, and said, This is the heir, come let us kill him, and caught and cast him out of the vineyard. He was sold by Judas for thirty pieces of silver. He was tempted, but resisted the tempter, was falsely accused, condemned, and cast into the grave. He adjudged one of the criminals who suffered with him to everlasting life, while the other he allowed to perish, according to his deserts. He was brought out of the prison of the grave, and a name was given to him, and at his name it is proclaimed that every knee shall bow. Phil. ii. 10. He provides food *without money*

and without price, for those whom he is not ashamed to call his brethren, and saves their lives; and though he may seem to deal hardly with them for a season, so that through much tribulation they must enter his kingdom, he will in the end prove that he acts graciously towards them. He is gone to that heavenly country, whither, as the forerunner of his people, he has entered, there to prepare a place for them. He conducts them in their journey thither, and they shall eat and drink with him at his table in his kingdom, and shall behold the glory which God hath given him.

MOSES was, in many respects, a very remarkable type of Jesus Christ. At his birth he was saved from the general slaughter of the infants of the Israelites, which took place by a tyrant's command, and was afterwards compelled to fly into a foreign country to save his life. Moses was the meekest of men. His Divine commission was accredited by the signs and wonders which he was enabled to perform. He compelled the magicians who contended with him in Egypt, to confess his superior power. He controlled the swelling of the sea, which retired at his command. He fed the people with bread from heaven in the wilderness. God talked with him face to face, and the words which he heard he reported to the people. He appointed seventy elders, endued with a portion of his own spirit, to share his labours, and sent out twelve men to view the land of promise. Moses was the "CHOSEN" of the Lord, Psalm vi. 23, and by way of eminence, called his "SERVANT," Numbers, xii. 7. Moses was the most distinguished PROPHET of Israel, whom the Lord knew face to face. Deut. xxxiv, 10. He was the RULER and DELIVERER or redeemer of the people from Egyptian

bondage. Acts, vii. 35. He was the **LAWGIVER**, Numbers, xxi. 18, and the **JUDGE** of Israel, Exodus, xviii. 13, and the **MEDIATOR** of that covenant which God made with them. Deut. v. 5. He was an **INTERCESSOR** for them. Exodus, xxxii. 11. Psalm, cvi. 23. He was their **LEADER**, Exodus, xxxii. 34. In their journey through the wilderness, on their way to the promised land, when receiving the law, he fasted for forty days and forty nights, and when he descended from the mountain his face shone with the reflected glory of God.

In all these respects, Moses, in a very remarkable manner, prefigured Jesus Christ, with whom his parents were compelled to flee into a foreign land to escape from the slaughter of the infants that took place by a tyrant's command. Jesus Christ was meek and lowly, but approved by signs and miracles which God did by him. He compelled the devils whom he cast out to acknowledge him as the holy one of God. The winds and the sea obeyed his voice; he fed miraculously the multitudes who followed him. He was with the Father, and hath revealed him, and speaks the word of God. He sent forth seventy disciples, whom he endowed with his spirit, and twelve Apostles to go into and search out every land. God pointed him out as his "SERVANT" and his "ELECT," Isaiah, xlii. 1. He was that **PROPHET** whom Moses foretold God was to raise up *like unto him*, the **DELIVERER** and Redeemer of his people from the bondage of Sin and Satan. He is their **LAWGIVER** and the **JUDGE** of Israel, Micah, v. 1. The **MEDIATOR** of the new Covenant made with the house of Israel, their **INTERCESSOR**, who ever liveth to intercede for them. He is the **LEADER** or captain of their salvation. Leading them through the wilderness of

this world, in which they are strangers, to the promised land of rest. In entering upon his work, he fasted forty days and forty nights ; when he was on the holy mount of transfiguration, his face did shine as the sun. "*Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were spoken after,* but Christ as a son over his own house." Is this similitude and correspondence, in so many and such important particulars between Moses and Christ, the effect of chance ? "Let us search," says one, "all the records of universal history, and see if we can find a man who was so like to Moses as Christ, or so like to Christ as Moses. If we cannot find such an one, then we have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God.

One thing further respecting Moses must be remarked. On account of his sinning against God, he was not permitted to enter the promised land, of which he was so desirous, and for which he earnestly besought the Lord. The sentence, however, that excluded him remained unchanged, and he was commanded to speak no more of that matter. It was necessary that his death, as the mediator of that first covenant, should intervene before Israel could enter the land of promise, otherwise an important part of his typical resemblance to Jesus Christ, as the mediator of the new covenant, could not have been exhibited. Through sin Moses forfeited this privilege ; and, on account of sin, the death of the true mediator of the people of God was necessary, in order that they may be put in possession of their eternal inheritance.* Moses, although he wrote of Christ,

* From this part of the history of Moses, in God's refusing to hear his prayer, Christians may derive a useful lesson. In refe-

was not aware of the correspondence, in all its circumstances, of the part he was acting with that of the Messiah, otherwise he would not have urged his request as he did.

Neither Moses, however, nor any single individual, could furnish a complete representation of Jesus Christ. Many, or rather all of those who during the Old Testament dispensation "obtained a good report through faith," in one way or other prefigured him. In all of them, there were points of resemblance; but still, like the law, they were only the shadow, and not the very image, of him that was to come. Moses, though the leader of Israel through the wilderness, did not conduct them into the promised land. That honour was reserved for Joshua his successor, who was descended from Joseph.

JOSHUA was the first of the typical characters who bore the name of the Messiah, Jesus and Joshua, which imports Jehovah the Saviour, being one in the original languages. Joshua conducted the people of Israel safely through the divided river of Jordan into the promised land, and set up twelve stones as "a memorial to the children of Israel for ever," of this great deliverance. He conquered Jericho, the walls of which fell on the *seventh* day, at the blowing

rence to spiritual things, they cannot be too importunate. "This," says an Apostle, "is the will of God, even your sanctification;" therefore in this respect they may ask what they will, and it shall be done unto them. But as to temporal matters, they are not proper judges of what is best for them. Were many of their petitions granted, it would prove their ruin, or granting them would be contrary to some of the great but unknown purposes of God.

of trumpets. He subdued the enemies of Israel, and settled them in peace in the land of promise. In all this, Joshua was a type of "the Captain of salvation,"—"the Captain of the host of the Lord," in which character Jesus Christ appeared to Joshua. Jesus Christ is Jehovah the Saviour, who leads his people safely through the valley of the shadow of death, of which the river of Jordan, flowing between the wilderness and Canaan, was a striking representation. He brings them into their promised inheritance, which Canaan prefigured, of which he puts them in peaceful possession, and subdues all their enemies. After he had passed through death for them and for himself, he appointed twelve apostles as his "witnesses" to all future generations of this great deliverance. When, by the command of Joshua, the "*seven* priests" blew the "*seven* trumpets of rams' horns," and "compassed the city *seven* times," "it came to pass at the *seventh* time, when the priests blew with the trumpets," the wall of Jericho "fell down flat;" and so when, by the command of Jesus, "the *seventh* angel" shall sound the trumpet, the bulwarks of Satan's kingdom shall be overthrown, and "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." Rev. xi. 15.

JONAH was a type of Jesus Christ. When the Scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign, he referred them to Jonah, saying, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Jonah, who is the first prophet we read of that was sent to reform a Gentile nation, received a commission from God to go to the city of Nineveh.

Being averse to execute so dangerous and difficult a service, he attempted to make his escape, embarking in a ship bound to Tarshish. But a storm arose, and Jonah voluntarily counselled the mariners to cast him into the sea. They endeavoured, in spite of the tempest, to reach the shore, but in vain. They therefore cast him into the deep, and immediately the storm and the raging of the sea ceased. A fish prepared by God swallowed up Jonah, at whose command it again vomited him out alive upon the dry land on the *third day*, after which he fulfilled his commission, and preached with success to Nineveh, whither he had been sent. The sin and the reluctance of the prophet necessary in order to the sign, are altogether inapplicable personally to his great antitype; and were these to make it void, no type of the Redeemer could be found in this sinful world. Atonement was made even for the altars of Israel, as well as for the priest the offerer, before they could be used for religious services. But the commission of Jonah being executed only through death, which is the effect of sin—the consequent and immediate appeasing of the tempest—his deliverance from the bottom of the deep on the third day, and the successful accomplishment of the ministry he had received, strikingly represented *Him* in whose name the Psalmist says, “All thy billows have gone over me, I sink in deep waters;” and who, going up to Jerusalem before his death, compared his sufferings to an immersion in water, saying, “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished;” who voluntarily died and was buried, but saw no corruption; and who, having stilled the tempest of the wrath of God, came

forth again from the grave on the *third day* to preach salvation, and successfully to accomplish the end for which he was sent.

The most remarkable types of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, besides that of Jonah, are the following : Of his death—the prison of Joseph—the sparrow whose blood was poured out, and the sacrifices of living animals. The chief types of his resurrection, are the sacrifice of Isaac, who was received in a figure from the dead—Joseph coming out of prison—the Israelites going up out of Jordan—the sparrow which, on the cleansing of the leper, was let go, and flew into the air—the temple of Jerusalem, which was rebuilt by Ezra and Nehemiah, and also those who, before the advent of Jesus Christ, were restored to life ; for these were all representations and preludes of the resurrection of the Messiah.

The PROPHEETS who, from time to time, were raised up in Israel, prefigured in their OFFICE Jesus Christ, as they also gave witness to him. Like all his other types, they were but faint shadows, in comparison of Him “ who was a prophet mighty in deed and in word, before God and all the people,” for they received but a small measure of grace and light from on high, in comparison of that fulness which is in him. The same spirit animated them, though not inherent in them, but in Jesus Christ it was properly his own. These prophets were also his forerunners, for although that title is in a peculiar manner assigned to John the Baptist, it also belonged to all the other prophets, for they all prepared the way for him, and were sent for that purpose. But Jesus Christ was not the forerunner of any one, he being himself the end he had in

view. They were ministers of his, and the degrees of supernatural and spiritual light which they possessed, were communicated by him, which, although limited, and bearing no proportion to the measure of the Spirit with which he was endowed, yet fitted them to represent him in figure, to prepare the way for his coming, to announce his advent, to communicate instruction to the people, and to fill up a prominent and distinguished department in that typical dispensation to which they belonged.

The **HIGH PRIESTS**, who, as the chief men in Israel, appeared before God in their sacred office and services, and the whole Levitical priesthood, pre-figured, as is expressly taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the "great High Priest who is passed into the heavens." The priesthood of Aaron, after its manner, freed men who had committed sins from merited punishment. It established in its way a certain communion with God, and brought upon them a certain kind of peace and benediction. It was the foundation and support of that covenant to which it belonged, for the whole of the Divine service under the law, all the worship which God received from the people of Israel, and the promises and advantages which he gave them, were established in the Aaronic priesthood. Except through that priesthood, Israel had none of that communion with Him which had been promised to Abraham and his posterity. That ancient priesthood had its services, which consisted in the offering of **SACRIFICES**, in entering into the holy place, there to sprinkle the blood of the victim on the ark of the covenant, so making **INTERCESSION**, and in **BLESSING** the people. For these three purposes Aaron

was anointed, consecrated, and established. All those things which typically are found in the Levitical priesthood, and in which it specially represented things that were to come, belonged spiritually and efficaciously to the priesthood of Jesus Christ. He also offered his SACRIFICE, that is his body, on earth, and afterwards entered the holiest of all, that is Heaven, to present to God the infinite price of his oblation, which is his blood, which is no other than his INTERCESSION, and as he blessed his Apostles when he parted from them, so at the last day he will come forth and pronounce the BLESSING on his people, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father."

In constituting the Levitical priesthood a type of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, God, in order to prevent men from resting in the figure, without extending their views to the thing signified, had, in his wisdom, marked it with many imperfections, besides pointing out, even in the books of Moses themselves, another order of priesthood, namely, that of Melchizedec, far more excellent than that of Aaron. The Aaronic priesthood was established without an oath. It was established only for a time, and it sanctified but to the purifying of the flesh; expiating no sins but those that were typical, that is to say, sins that in their own nature were not sins. By the efficacy of that priesthood, men had only a figurative and not a real communion with God, which consisted in this, that God was their God in a temporal sense, and bestowed on them earthly blessings, and received from them a service that was ceremonial and external. The priesthood of Aaron was conferred on a man who was sinful, finite, and mortal, and it was not joined with

the prophetic or kingly office. That priesthood belonged to many at the same time, though one only was high priest; and although there was but one high priest at a time, there were many successively. The high priest, too, entered only once every year into the holy place made with hands. The ancient sacrifices could not expiate all of even typical sins, nor sanctify the consciences of men for ever, not even with a typical and ceremonial sanctification. The Aaronic priesthood subsisted only till that of Christ was established. But while "perfection" was not by the Levitical priesthood; and while it bore no proportion to the priesthood of Jesus Christ, in which those characters wanting in it were found; yet, like the prophetic office in Israel, it was divinely adapted in all its parts—its priests, its altars, and its sacrifices—to exhibit an emblematical and a most striking representation of the office of an high priest, of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, who, through the eternal Spirit, was to offer himself without spot to God.

The **KINGS**, in their office and government, were types of Jesus Christ. All were so, who had in Israel any degree of royal dignity, as at the beginning Joshua, and the Judges, and afterwards Saul and David, and the other kings. All of them were types of that spiritual King; but chiefly he was prefigured by David and Solomon. In *general*, David represented that part of the royalty of Jesus Christ, which was marked with humiliation, reproach, and persecution; Solomon, on the contrary, represented the glorious part of his reign. David prefigured him in his combats, and Solomon in his triumphs. David, when he prepared the materials

for building the Temple, prefigured him when he was on earth; and Solomon, in his building and consecrating it, represented him after his ascension to heaven. In *particular*, however, David may be said to have represented the two states of royalty of Jesus Christ. David was first anointed King of Israel by Samuel in the city of Bethlehem, and in the same spot that angels celebrated the birth of the Messiah, in proclaiming to the shepherds tidings of great joy, announcing that to them was born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ (anointed) the Lord. David having remained for some time after his anointing unknown and despised, was at length acknowledged as king by the tribe of Judah, and reigned as such seven years in Hebron, yet rejected by the rest of the Israelites. At last, however, he was solemnly recognised as king by all the twelve tribes. On this account, it is said in the Psalms, "the stone which the builders rejected, has become the head of the corner,—this is the doing of the Lord." All this corresponds to what took place respecting Jesus Christ, who, after he had remained for a long time unknown, and contemned by all the world, was, however, recognised as the true Messiah by a small number of disciples who gathered around him. Afterwards, he was solemnly acknowledged as such in the midst of many nations, and at last "to him every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." David, then, in his birth-place, in his afflictions, and in his prosperity, and of whom, "as concerning the flesh, Christ came," and Solomon, by the wisdom, by the glory, and the peace of his reign, both typified the King of Zion, who is the "King of kings."

Thus the prophets, the priests, and the kings of

Israel, were types of Jesus Christ, in whose person the prophetic, the priestly, and the kingly offices are united. And as he was the Messiah, or the Anointed of God— anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power,—so they also were anointed for their several offices. Jesus Christ, too, was elected of God—the first elected, and emphatically called, “the elect” of God; and those who among them were his most remarkable types, were also the objects of a special election. Thus Moses, who, as a prophet, was eminently a type of Christ, was called the chosen of God, Psalm, cvi. 23. Thus Aaron was invested with the priesthood by a particular election, Exod. xxviii. And David was called to the kingdom in the same manner. “He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion which he loved.—He chose David, also, his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds,” Psalm lxxviii, 67. It should also be remarked, that these three offices were never joined in one person. Moses, who appears as chief of the ancient prophets, was not honoured either with the priesthood or the crown of royalty. Aaron, on whom God conferred the priesthood, had no part in the kingly or prophetic office; and as to the kings, they were to be punished as Uzziah was, when they undertook to perform the functions of the priesthood. Thus every thing was disposed in the providence of God, to point out the imperfection of the law, and to lead men to Jesus Christ alone; for in him all these offices are conjoined in a manner the most complete. He is prophet, and priest, and king, the only centre in whom all the lines of the Christian religion terminate—the only source from which they they take their origin. The

union of these three offices in him mark the infinite dignity of the person who sustains them ; for if no man is capable of sustaining at once the priestly, the prophetic, and the kingly offices, even as a shadow or figure, how ineffable must be the majesty of Jesus Christ, who bears all these three dignities, not in figure, but in truth and reality ! The prophetic character, too, becomes more glorious, when associated with the priesthood and royalty, as is also the case with these two other offices, when all the three appear in union. But Jesus Christ declares himself to be “ the way, the truth, and the life.” He is the WAY to the Father by his priestly, the TRUTH by his prophetic, and the LIFE by his kingly character. Of God he is made to his people wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. He is their *wisdom*, as being a prophet, their *righteousness*, as being a priest, and their *sanctification* and *redemption*, as being a king. These three offices form the whole subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where Paul treats of the *prophetic* character of Jesus Christ, exalting it above the angels, the messengers of God, above Moses, and above all the other ways in which God has revealed himself. He treats of his *kingly* character, exalting it above Joshua and his rest, the land of Canaan, into which Joshua conducted the Israelites ; and, finally, he describes his *priesthood* as superior to that of Aaron, in the legal dispensation.

Certain OBJECTS and APPEARANCES were likewise employed to furnish typical representations of the Messiah and his salvation.

Jacob “ *dreamed, and behold a LADDER set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven ; and*

behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it," Gen. xxviii. 12. Jesus Christ is the only medium of communication between heaven and earth. The constitution of the Redeemer's person, as uniting the human and the Divine natures, though the distance between them is infinite, is here represented, as also his mediation, by which a communication is opened both for the drawing nigh of God to men, that he may dwell with them, and for the access of men to God, that they may have their conversation in heaven, to which they shall ascend by Jesus Christ alone. Upon this ladder Jacob beheld the angels ascending and descending; and it is by Jesus Christ that angels descend from heaven to earth, and from earth ascend again to heaven. It is from him, as the Lord of angels, that they receive all their commands for their ministrations to the saints. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation?" They ministered to Jesus Christ, the Head, while he was on earth, and they continue to minister to all his members. Above this ladder stood the Lord himself, speaking gracious words to his servant Jacob, confirming the covenant made with his fathers, and thus intimating that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and well pleased in his beloved Son. Apparently, in allusion to this mystic ladder, Jesus Christ declared to Nathaniel, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," John, i. 51.

"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, in a FLAME OF FIRE, OUT OF THE MIDST OF A BUSH: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed," Exod. iii. 2. Here

the angel of the Lord, not a created angel, but the un-created angel of the covenant, assumed to himself the high title of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the self-existent Jehovah—"I am that I am." This was a vision of the future incarnation of Jesus Christ. This bush in the wilderness represented the human nature of him whom Isaiah compares to a tender plant, and a root out of a dry ground, having no form nor comeliness. The flame of fire shadowed forth his deity, fire being in Scripture a frequent emblem of the presence of God, who is "a consuming fire." This union of the flame of fire with the bush, denoted the union of the Godhead and the manhood of him of whom Moses, in his dying benediction, spoke as having "dwelt in the bush." As the fire was in the bush, and the bush in the fire, so the man Christ Jesus is in God, and God is in the man, while the natures of both, though mysteriously united, still are not confounded, but retain their distinct properties. This angel who dwelt in the bush, in a flame of fire, required the most profound respect and religious homage from Moses, and Moses beheld this great sight with reverence and awe, as the disciples afterwards beheld the glory of him who in human nature dwelt among them.

"*The Lord went before them by day in a PILLAR OF CLOUD, to lead them in the way ; and by night in a PILLAR OF FIRE, to give them light to go by day and night,*" Exod. xiii. 21. This miraculous cloud never changed its form of a pillar, and always maintained its station over the tabernacle during forty years, and led the people of Israel during all that time through the wilderness. It was a visible symbol of the presence of God, and was an illustrious type of

Jesus Christ, first in the care of his providence, and then in the special light of his gospel. The Lord thus appearing to Israel, and conducting them in the veil of the cloud, gave a pre-intimation of his appearing in a veil of flesh. Here, then, was an emblem of that glorious person, in whom the brightness of Divinity is conjoined with the darkness of humanity; for as there were not two pillars, the one of cloud and the other of fire, but one pillar both of cloud and of fire, so there are not two persons of Emmanuel, the one God and the other man, but one person, who is both God and man. That glorious angel, whom the apostle John beheld rising out of the east, who was Jesus Christ himself, was clothed with a cloud, and his feet were as pillars of fire. This pillar of fire and cloud was the guide of the Israelites through the wilderness, leading them in the way. It was their guard, separating and protecting them from their enemies; it enlightened them in darkness, and out of it the Lord spake with them. In all this it was an emblem of him who afterwards appeared in the world, and of whom it was declared that he would "create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon all her assemblies, a cloud of smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence." Isa. iv. 5. And as this pillar was a light to conduct the Israelites, so it was darkness to the Egyptians, and through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, the Lord looked unto their host, and troubled them. In the same way, Jesus Christ is a stumbling-block and foolishness to the enemies of God, but to those who are called, the wisdom and the power of God; and the gospel is a savour of death to those to whom it is hid,

to whom at last the Lord will be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them. In this cloud, as in the sea, all the children of Israel were baptized unto Moses, 1 Cor. x. 2; and all the children of God are baptized unto Jesus Christ, Rom. vi. 3. And as that cloud conducted Israel after the flesh, into the earthly Canaan, their promised rest, so Jesus Christ conducts Israel after the spirit, into the heavenly Canaan, the rest which remaineth to the people of God. Without that pillar of fire and cloud, Israel could not have discovered their path through the wilderness; and without Jesus Christ, who is the "way" to the Father, believers could not find their path through this world of which he is the "light." "He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people," Exod. xiii. 22. And Jesus Christ says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

"He rained down MANNA upon them to eat, and gave them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food; he sent them food to the full," Psalm lxxviii. 24, 25. *"And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat,"* Exod. xvi. 14. This manna was a type of Jesus Christ, which he applied to himself when he said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. I am the living bread which came down from heaven,"* John, xxxii. 51. In like manner the Apostle Paul, referring to the spiritual meaning, of the manna, says, *"They did all eat the same spiritual meat,"* 1 Cor. x. 3.

God fed the people with manna, that he might make them "*know that man doth not live by bread only.*" This manna was not provided by the Israelites with their own labour and skill, but showered from heaven, and prepared for their use even at the time when they were murmuring against God. In like manner, believers can do nothing to obtain or to merit Jesus Christ, who is the gift of God to those who were "without strength, ungodly, sinners and enemies to God," Rom. v. 6, 10. As the manna, before it was fit for food, must be "ground in mills, or beat in a mortar," it was necessary that, to satisfy the justice of God, Jesus Christ should be bruised for the iniquities of his people, that he might be made perfect through sufferings, in order to afford spiritual nourishment to their souls. As the manna was loathed by "the mixed multitude" among the people who lusted after the good things of Egypt; in like manner the things of this world are preferred to Jesus Christ and his salvation, by multitudes of those who take the name of Christians. As the manna could be of no use to the Israelites unless they gathered and eat it, so no benefit can be derived from Jesus Christ, except by eating his flesh and drinking his blood. "*Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you,*" John, vi. 53. As the manna was indispensably necessary for the children of Israel, as long as they remained in the wilderness, in which, if after a season it had failed, they must have perished, so it is necessary for believers to live by faith on the Son of God, during all the days of their pilgrimage here on earth. The pot of manna laid up by the side of the ark, represented the permanency of that spiritual food which Jesus Christ provides for his

people, and which, in allusion to what was contained in this pot, he calls the "hidden manna;" and, in the same manner Aaron's rod, which budded, prefigured the perpetual efficacy of Christ's everlasting priesthood. As the manna ceased not till the people of Israel eat of the corn of Canaan, so the people of God will feed on Him who is the true bread from heaven, while they pass through this world, and until they arrive at their eternal rest.

"Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the ROCK before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock," Numb. xxi. 8. To this rock, out of which God caused streams to flow, to supply the people of Israel with water in the wilderness, the Apostle Paul expressly ascribes a typical signification—"that rock was Christ," 1 Cor. x. 4. It was emblematical of Him who is the "rock of offence," yet the "sure foundation which God hath laid in Zion," and the "chief corner stone." That rock, although outwardly it appeared to be hard and dry, yet contained a rich abundance of water for all the people. In the same way, Jesus Christ, although he appeared without form and comeliness, and as a root out of a dry ground, was full of grace and truth, and out of his fulness all believers receive. The waters which issued from that rock represented the living water, of which Jesus Christ himself has said, "*Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*" That water did not flow from the rock till it was smitten by the rod of

Moses the lawgiver, and in the same way the blessings of salvation flow from Jesus Christ only as he was smitten of God by the curse of the broken law, in consequence of which the Holy Spirit, in all his blessed influences, which are compared to "rivers of living water" (John, vii. 38), is communicated to all who believe. All this was denoted by the blood and water which flowed from the side of Jesus Christ, when pierced. The blood was the atonement for sin, and the water represented the grace of the Holy Spirit. Thus He came by water and blood; and as the typical representation of the smitten rock in the wilderness was fully verified in Him, so also was the following direct prophecy,—"*And a man shall be as rivers of waters in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a dry land;*" Isaiah, xxxii. 2. Moses smote the rock twice, but was punished for his presumption. Jesus Christ, who was that rock, was to be smitten only once by the rod of Divine Justice.

"*The Lord said unto Moses, make thee a FIERY SERPENT, and set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived;*" Numbers, xxi. viii. This remarkable type the Lord Jesus Christ applied to himself, when, in preaching the gospel to Nicodemus, he said, "*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;*" John, iii. 14. This emblem, and the occasion on which it was exhibited, furnished a striking representa-

tion of the deadly nature of sin, and of the remedy which God hath provided. It contained a remarkable pre-intimation of the manner of death which Jesus Christ was to suffer. It was by the old serpent that man had been bitten, and being of their father the devil, they had been transformed into serpents as his seed, and it therefore pleased God that his son should be represented by a serpent, on account of the curse with which he was charged, to deliver from it his people. But as that brazen serpent had only the form and the colour, but not the poison of a living serpent, so Jesus Christ, although he came in "the likeness of sinful flesh," (Rom. viii. 3,) was absolutely free from the smallest contagion of that mortal poison with which all men are infected. Adam, the first man, and the head of the old creation, although of the earth, was formed in the image of God. Jesus Christ, the second man, and the head of the new creation, the Lord from heaven, begotten by the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost, was, in his conception and birth, perfectly holy, (Luke, i. 35), being conceived in such a manner, that although partaking of our nature, he was free from the corruption which now accompanies it in other men. The serpent was lifted up on a pole, and Christ was lifted up on the cross. The serpent was lifted up, that whosoever looked upon it, might be healed and live; and Christ was crucified, that whosoever looketh to him may be saved. "*Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth,*" Isaiah, xlv. 22. "*And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me,*" John xii. 32. But as the looking to this serpent of brass did not prevent the Israelites from still being bitten by the poisonous serpents, but secured against the fatal consequence of their otherwise mortal

bite, so the effect of looking to Jesus Christ, that is, believing in him, (John, iii. 15), does not exempt from temptation, and from afterwards sinning while in the wilderness of this world, but assures all who believe in him, that they shall not perish, but have eternal life. It was by looking on the serpent, and not by any work done by them, that the Israelites were healed, and it is only by believing on Jesus Christ that men are saved. "*To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for (or rather unto) righteousness.*" "*Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace, and if by grace, then it is no more of works.*" As in the camp of Israel, whoever looked to the serpent, whatever was his condition or character, or whatever was the nature of the wound he had received, was healed; in like manner, whatever has been the previous character of him who looks to Jesus Christ—however numerous and aggravated his sins may have been, he is saved by him. Of this, the salvation of the thief on the cross furnishes an illustrious example. The remedy of the brazen serpent proved effectual to every one who beheld it, however weak his sight might be, and the smallest degree of faith unites the soul to the Saviour, and derives the blessings of salvation from him.

Certain PLACES were in the Old Testament adapted to represent Jesus Christ and his salvation.

The GARDEN OF EDEN, that earthly paradise, in which God placed the first of the human race, represented the heavenly inheritance of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, which is the Paradise of God. The tree of life in the midst of it, was a figure of Jesus Christ, who is "that eternal life," on whom

whosoever believeth, "shall never die." At the opening of Scripture we read of this inheritance on *earth*, which soon proved corruptible, was defiled, and faded away, from which all the children of the first Adam were expelled. Towards the close of Scripture, we read of the inheritance in *heaven* which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved for all the children of the second Adam. At the commencement of Scripture our attention is directed to the tree of life in the midst of the garden, the plucking of whose fruit, by any effort of his own, was prohibited to man as soon as he had sinned, and the way to it guarded by cherubim and a flaming sword. At the termination of Scripture, it is once more presented to our view, as flourishing in the midst of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, and on either side of the river of the water of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, that is, of all kinds; and yielding its fruit every month, that is, perpetually. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations, which imports its life-giving efficacy in all respects. The cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way to it, no longer prevent from access to it the children of God, who are made by him who has passed under the sword of Divine justice, partakers of its fruit. "*To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.*" "*Because I live ye shall live also.*" "*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*"

The WILDERNESS through which the people of Israel, under Divine guidance and protection, passed as travellers to the promised land, was barren and deso-

late, producing no food, without any road or sign of direction, but inhabited by noxious animals. It aptly represented the state of this world, which is the kingdom of Satan, the ground of which is cursed, through which the people of God, who are sojourners and pilgrims, pass to their heavenly rest. Like the wilderness, it is barren, and destitute of any thing spiritually good. All spiritual food, as well as all necessary direction for their journey, must be supplied from above, while snares and enemies beset their path.

The LAND OF CANAAN was a type of the heavenly country. It was the inheritance given by promise to Abraham and his posterity. As his descendants after the flesh inherited the one, so his spiritual seed shall inherit the other. Canaan was "the land of rest," after the toils and dangers of the wilderness. To make it a fit inheritance, and an emblem of that inheritance which is undefiled, and into which there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, it was cleared of the ungodly inhabitants. As the introduction of the people of Israel into that land was not effected by their own power or efforts (Joshua, xxix. 12; Psl. xlv. 4), but by the unmerited goodness and power of God; so the children of God do not obtain possession of the heavenly inheritance by their own power or efforts, but by the free grace and power of God (Rom. ix. 16). As those who believed not were excluded from Canaan, so all unbelievers will be excluded from heaven. As Moses could not lead the people of Israel into Canaan, that honour being reserved for Joshua, so it is not by the law represented by Moses that the people of God shall enter heaven, but by the gospel of Jesus Christ, the true

Joshua to whom that glory belongs. No other country on earth could have been selected as a fitter emblem of heaven. It is called in Scripture "the pleasant land,"—"the glory of all lands,"—"a land flowing with milk and honey." "A sight of this territory," says a late traveller, "can alone convey any adequate idea of its surprising produce. It is truly the Eden of the East, rejoicing in the abundance of its wealth. Under a wise and beneficent government, the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvest; the salubrity of its air; its limpid springs, its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains; its hills and vales; all these, added to the serenity of its climate, proves this land to be indeed 'a field which the Lord hath blessed.' God hath given it of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine."

CITIES OF REFUGE were appointed for the people of Israel. To impress on their minds the greater abhorrence of the crime of murder, the nearest of kin was permitted to put to death the man who, even without design, had killed his neighbour. But to these cities of refuge he might flee for safety. Roads to them, of great breadth, and bridges where necessary, were provided; and inscriptions set up to direct him who fled. When arrived in one of them, the guilty person found the necessary accommodation, and his life was placed under protection of the laws. There he was to remain till the death of the High Priest, after which he might return into the land of his possession. We have here an apt representation of the safety of the believer who has "*fled for refuge to the hope set before him.*" The high way is prepared, and abundant direction provided

for him; and, through the death of the great High Priest, he will at length be released from all confinement and bondage. Speaking of the days of the gospel, Isaiah says, "*And a high way shall be there, the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein.*" "*And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.*" "*Thou hast been a strength to the poor,—a strength to the needy in his distress,—a refuge from the storm.*"

The city of JERUSALEM was taken possession of by David. On the hill of Zion was the residence of the kings of Israel, and the place where the temple stood. Jerusalem was the capital of Judea, where the worship of God was established, and where all the nation of Israel assembled at their solemn feasts. "*Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together, whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.*" "*Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the North, the city of the great King.*" It is called in Scripture the "*perfection of beauty;*" "*The joy of the whole earth;*" "*The city of God;*" "*The holy city.*" Jerusalem was a type of "*the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem;*" that city in the heavenly country for which Abraham looked, "*which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God,*"—of "*that great city, the holy Jerusalem,*" which John saw descending out of heaven from God, "*having the glory of God.*"—"*And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And*

the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

The TABERNACLE, which contained the ark of the covenant, and afterwards the TEMPLE at Jerusalem, were remarkable types of Jesus Christ. Both were erected according to EXACT PATTERNS: The first was given to Moses, when it was said to him, "*Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the Mount.*" The last was given to David: "*All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.*" There may be parts of them which, like certain circumstances in a parable, are only necessary to complete the figure, and not essential to the moral; but as a whole, and also in many, if not all, of their minute parts, they were eminent representations of Jesus Christ and his salvation.

Alluding to the temple, and applying the figure to himself, Jesus Christ said of his own body, "*Destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days.*" It is only through him that sinners have access to God. The temple, accordingly, in which the cloud, the symbol of the Divine presence, over the mercy-seat, appeared, was a figure of him that was to come,—God manifest in the flesh, and who as such was appointed to be the only medium of communication with God. The priests were to officiate in it, the sacrifices to be offered, and the worship of God to be performed, according to the order prescribed. Since the destruction of that temple, all these services have become legally impracticable. When at a distance from the temple, the Israelite was to have respect to it in drawing near to God, lifting up

his hands towards the "*holy oracle.*" At its dedication, Solomon prayed that if the people should worship the Lord towards that house, God would hear them in heaven. Accordingly Daniel, in a distant country, prayed, "*his window being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem.*" Jonah calling upon God from the belly of the fish, says, "*I will look again towards thy holy temple.*" "*If,*" says Jehosaphat, "*when evil cometh upon us, the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence (for thy name is in this house), and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.*"

Every thing within the temple, and connected with its service, typified the Redeemer and his salvation. Within the second veil stood "*the ark of the covenant,*" which contained the two tables of the law, over which was the propitiatory or mercy-seat, of pure gold. These tables were inscribed with the finger of God, and while all the other statutes given to Israel were placed by its side, as preparatory to their removal, that law of everlasting obligation, which was pronounced by the voice of God himself, was laid up *within the ark* under the mercy-seat. In strict correspondence with this remarkable emblem, the Divine Redeemer is introduced in the Psalms, declaring, "*I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea THY LAW IS WITHIN MY HEART.*" The propitiatory covering, or mercy-seat, in an especial manner signified Christ, as covering and taking away the guilt of his people's sins, for God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself (2 Cor. v. 19). That propitiatory or mercy-seat being placed in the holy of holies of the tabernacle, or of the temple, within the veil, was concealed from the eyes of all the people of

Israel, because the expiation was not yet made; but God has now "set forth" Jesus Christ before the eyes of all believers, and openly exhibited him to their view as a propitiation. Rom. iii. 25. The mercy-seat, which, being of pure gold, denoted the divinity of Jesus Christ, laid upon the wood which represented his humanity, teacheth what it is that adds infinite worth and value to the obedience and sufferings of the man Christ Jesus; namely, the infinite dignity of his godhead. From the mercy-seat, as a throne of grace, God gave gracious answers to the people, showing that, as sin and the breaking of the holy law were the cause of their separation from God, so through Christ, the true propitiatory, by whom the honours of the broken law are restored and maintained, intercourse is again established. The example of the signal punishment of the people of Bethshemeth, for looking into the ark on the tables of the law, with the covering of the propitiatory or mercy-seat removed, awfully displayed the necessity of the great propitiation, and the heavy curse of the broken law, which will fall on all those "*who, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God,*"—who, unacquainted with the extent and perfection of his holy law, venture to approach to God in their own supposed righteousness, and to stand the test of that law without a covering or propitiation, and who, above all, reject and remove from between them and the holy law that propitiation which God has provided.

INSTITUTIONS OF WORSHIP, under the Old Testament dispensation, were typical of Jesus Christ.

SACRIFICE appointed from the beginning, and con-

tinued till the Messiah put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, was the chief of the instituted types. Animals that were accounted clean, and fit for human food, being devoted to God, were slain upon an altar, to make atonement for sin. To consider this service as possessing any importance in itself, otherwise than as a figurative sign, would be giving it a place to which it cannot, on any just ground, be entitled. Atonement comprehends the satisfying of Divine justice, procuring remission of sin, access to God, and acceptance with him, deliverance from death, and all other miseries that are the fruit of sin. To ascribe such effects any otherwise than typically to the sacrificing of animals, is to ascribe effects of the greatest importance to causes that bear no manner of proportion to them. The shedding of the blood of beasts is no more than what is done daily, for no higher end than subsistence to the body, and bears no proportion to expiation for the sin of the soul. The blood of animals man had no right to shed at all, unless permission had been given by God himself, to whom these animals and their lives belong. The offerer was therefore presenting to God only what was his own; and it could not be conceived that there was any inherent efficacy in what was thus presented, to remove guilt. But when viewed in its proper light of emblematical signification, the slaying of an animal devoted to God, over which the offerer confessed his sins, thus laying them upon it, and putting it to death as loaded with guilt, was calculated to impress, in the strongest manner, the conviction that death was the consequence of sin; that the life of the offerer was forfeited by it, of which this action was a solemn acknowledgment, but that God would graciously accept a

substitution. Thus it led forward the view of the worshipper to a method of delivery to be provided—to a sacrifice of intrinsic value, every way efficacious and well pleasing to God.

The institution of sacrifice having been appointed from the first entrance of sin, its remembrance was preserved, and handed down by every nation in the world; and no people, however barbarous, have been found altogether without some form of this institution. At the same time, the knowledge of the purpose for which sacrifice had been originally instituted, was, with the exception of the Jews, lost among all the nations. None of them could tell how they came to attend to it; by this means, however, they all had their minds possessed with a belief that atonement was necessary, and that repentance was not capable of expiating guilt. That the whole world should have agreed in a religious service so remarkable in itself, and which the light of nature could never have discovered to be acceptable to God, is an indubitable proof of the truth of the original revelation given to man, and of the whole human race being of one descent.

The skins with which God clothed our first parents, immediately after the intimation of deliverance by the seed of the woman, appear to have belonged to animals slain in sacrifice. The grant of animal food had not then been made, and of the instituted mode of worship by sacrifice, we have soon after the fullest confirmation in the case of Abel, who “*by faith offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.*” The principal requirements in sacrifice, afterwards enjoined under the Mosaic dispensation, namely, the bringing of “*the firstlings of his flock and the fat,*” were observed by

Abel. And his doing this by FAITH, *by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts,*" Heb. xi. 4, furnishes incontestable proof that sacrifice was the express appointment of God, and that as such it was observed by Abel. Being in this manner clothed, our first parents, in addition to the promise they had just heard, received assurance, by an emblematical representation, that God, providing an atonement for their guilt in the way of substitution, and preparing a robe to cover them, instead of the fig-leaves employed by themselves, would rescue them from that naked and helpless condition to which, by disobedience, they were reduced. In the histories of Noah, of Abraham, and of all the servants of God, of whom a particular account is given, we find that by them the institution of sacrifice was solemnly observed.

Under the Mosaic dispensation, the institution of sacrifice was established and regulated in a manner the most minute and particular. The whole of the Ceremonial Law, and all the numerous services and ordinances belonging to it, were figures that respected the mysteries of the Christian religion. Various kinds of offerings were appointed, both of animals and of the fruits of the earth, which represented the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the spiritual services of his people. In selecting the animals to be presented as victims, the most express directions were given both as to their kind and their being free from blemish. "*It shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish.*" "*Ye shall not offer unto the Lord that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land, because their corruption is in them, they*

shall not be accepted for you," Lev. xxii. 21, 24. The same precautions were to be carefully observed respecting the priest who was to offer the sacrifice, that he should be free from all blemish and bodily imperfection, while atonement was to be made for him, and even for the altar and the holy place, before the sacrifice could be offered. All this was appointed to typify the absolute perfection, the entire freedom from sin, of Him who is at once the priest, the altar, and the sacrifice, who, in the fulness of time, was to offer himself *without spot* to God.

Here it may be remarked, that there were two kinds of oblations. Those of one kind were accompanied with a perfume of incense which was burnt with them, and on this account they were called offerings "of a sweet savour unto the Lord," Lev. ii. 2, 9. Those of the other kind, although approved by the law, were not offerings of a sweet savour, because they were offered without the incense, Lev. ii. 12. But the burning of any incense on the offerings for sin, was prohibited, Lev. v. 11. It was thus taught that the remembrance of sin, and even the sacrifices that represented it, were not of a sweet smelling savour to God, Numbers, v. 15, for they could not take away sin. But Jesus Christ, taking the sins of his people upon himself, has removed that corruption. From this we learn the true import of the Apostle's remarks, Eph. v. 2, that Christ "hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour," that is to say, altogether pleasing to God.

Besides the particular daily sacrifices which were commanded to be offered, others of a very solemn description were to be presented at the appointed seasons,

while the great annual feasts all referred to Jesus Christ, and to that spiritual feast which his people celebrate under his reign, and that great and glorious rest into which they shall enter after the last judgment.

The feast of the PASSOVER was instituted when that decisive miracle of slaying all the first-born in Egypt was wrought, which vanquished the obstinacy of Pharaoh, and compelled him to allow the people of Israel to depart. Every family of Israel was commanded to kill a lamb, but a bone of him was not to be broken. It was to be a lamb of the first year, without blemish, to be roasted with fire, on which they were to feast, and the blood of which they were to strike on the side-posts and lintels of their doors. Under the protection of that blood, the Israelites were safe; the destroying angel, who in that night slew all the first-born among the Egyptians, being commanded to pass over those houses on the doors of which it was sprinkled. This was to be a standing ordinance in Israel, to be annually observed in all their generations. It was a memorial, as they were to inform their children, of that deliverance which they experienced in their departure from Egypt. By this deliverance from temporal death and temporal bondage, was strikingly prefigured the liberation of the people of God from the bondage of Satan, and from the dominion of sin and death, by the blood of Jesus Christ, of whom a bone was not to be broken, John, xix. 33, who is so often compared to a lamb without spot or blemish, and who, at the feast of the Passover, about 1500 years after its institution, was offered as the true paschal lamb, having been pointed out as "*the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of*

the world." When this took place, the observance of the Passover was abolished—the veil of the temporal deliverance was removed—and his disciples were afterwards to take the emblems of the body and blood of Christ, "*who is our passover, sacrificed for us,*" and eating and drinking in remembrance of him, to feast upon them in the presence of God. When all the miracles which Moses was enabled to perform before Pharaoh had failed of success, the slaying of the paschal lamb, and the exhibition of its sprinkled blood, that illustrious type of the great atonement, was the signal of the departure of the Israelites out of the house of bondage, and of the destruction of their enemies, whom after a little they were to see no more.

The feast of "FIRST FRUITS" was appointed to succeed the Passover. The commencement of the harvest, which, in such a climate as the Israelites enjoyed, would be very uniform, was on the day after the Passover. The people then presented a sheaf or an omer, containing an offering of the first fruits of the harvest; and till this was done they were not to taste any part of the produce of the year. They were then to count seven Sabbaths from the day they presented the sheaf; and on the morrow after the last of these Sabbaths, the fiftieth day, they were to abstain from work, to keep a religious assembly, and to present two loaves of fine flour *leavened*, as for food, not for sacrifice. These being the produce of the harvest, now fully prepared for use, were also called the first fruits unto the Lord. The whole of this service was a typical representation of good things to come; the *letter* which shadowed forth the *spirit*.

At the feast of the Passover, Jesus Christ was cru-

cified. On the morning after the third day of the Passover, the first day of the harvest, and of presenting the sheaf of first fruits, he rose from the grave, "*being the first fruits of them that slept.*" But till he had completed all that he was to do on earth, and had ascended to the Father, in consequence of which the Holy Spirit was sent forth, the fruit of the spiritual harvest was not fully prepared for use. The Apostles, therefore, during this interval, were to remain silent ; but on the fiftieth day, when the people of Israel were again assembled at the feast of Pentecost, to present the two loaves now to be used by them as *food*, the Holy Ghost was given, and then the bread of life being fully prepared, the Apostles began to minister the Gospel of God.

It is further to be remarked, that the resurrection of the Messiah, which completed the deliverance of believers from the bondage of sin, and which was the harbinger and pledge of their release from the power of death, took place in the same month, and on the same day of the month, that the Israelites were delivered from the bondage of Egypt. For the Israelites went out of Egypt, and Christ was crucified, on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan. And the descent of the Holy Ghost appears to have taken place on the same day on which the law was given to Israel, being fifty days after their departure from Egypt. The one was the giving of the letter written on the tables of stone, the other of the Spirit, written on the tables of the heart, 2 Cor. iii. 3. It should likewise be observed that Jesus Christ rose from the grave on the **EIGHTH** day, the day after the Sabbath, and the first day of the week, which was the eighth from the creation.

And as every thing belonging to the new dispensation was prefigured and shadowed forth under the old; we shall find, that various typical intimations were given of this change of the day of weekly rest. The EIGHTH day is accordingly distinguished throughout the Old Testament in a very remarkable manner.

Circumcision was to be administered to children on the EIGHTH day, Gen. xvii. 12, till which day the mother was not purified, Lev. xii. 2, 3. The first-born of cattle, which belonged to the Lord, were not to be *received* till the EIGHTH day of their age, “*on the EIGHTH day thou shalt give it to me,*” Exod. xxii. 30. On the EIGHTH day, but not before, they were *accepted in sacrifice*. “When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam, and from the eighth day, and thenceforward, it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the Lord,” Lev. xxii. 27. On the eighth day, the *consecration* of Aaron, High Priest, and his sons, was completed, Lev. ix. 1, 24. The *cleansing* of the leprosy, which was typical of cleansing from sin, took place, after various ceremonies, on the EIGHTH day, Lev. xiv. 23. On the EIGHTH day the cleansing from issues, emblematical of sin, was effected, Lev. xv. 14, 29. On the EIGHTH day atonement was made for the Nazarite who was defiled, Num. vi. 10. In the feast of tabernacles, the EIGHTH day was a Sabbath, and was called the great day of the feast. “*Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, and on the EIGHTH day shall be an holy convocation unto you,*” Lev. xxiii. 36. On the first day of this feast, thirteen bullocks were offered; on the other six days, the number of bullocks was

decreased by one each day ; so that, on the seventh day, only seven bullocks were offered. But on the eighth day, the number was reduced to *one* bullock, when these sacrifices were *ended*. At the dedication of the temple, when it was completed or *perfected*, the ark of the covenant being placed in it, Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him ; and, on the EIGHTH day, they made a solemn assembly, 2 Chron. vii. 8, 9 ; 1 Kings, viii. 8, 9. In sanctifying the temple in the time of Hezekiah, “ they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the EIGHTH day of the month came they to the porch of the Lord : so they sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days, and in the sixteenth” (the second eighth day) “ of the first month, they made an end,” 2 Chron. xix. 17. When the law was read by Ezra, “ *they kept the feast seven days, and on the EIGHTH day was a solemn assembly, according to the manner,*” Neh. viii. 18. Ezekiel, in his vision of the city and temple, towards the close of his prophecies, in which he appears to give figuratively, and in Old Testament language, a description of the Redeemer’s kingdom and church, says, “ *Seven days shall they purge the altar, and purify it, and they shall consecrate themselves, and when these days are expired, it shall be that upon the EIGHTH day, and so forward, the priest shall make your offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings, and I will accept you, saith the Lord.*” Let the correspondence of the *spirit* with the *letter* be now observed.

The work of creation was finished in six days, and on the seventh, God rested from his work, which completed a week, or the first series of time, in the

first creation. The EIGHTH day then was the first of a new series, and on this day, the day of his resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ rested from the work of the new creation. On that day, according to the prediction of the prophet Daniel, he brought in the "everlasting righteousness." Of this righteousness, circumcision was a seal*—a pledge or confirmation that it should be provided, on which account it would appear that this rite was to be performed on the EIGHTH day. On the EIGHTH day Jesus Christ was received as the first-born from the dead, which was typified by the first-born of cattle being received or given to the Lord on that day of their age. On the EIGHTH day he was raised from the dead, in token that his sacrifice was accepted—typified also by their being on that day "accepted for an offering." On the EIGHTH day being raised up, he was "consecrated for evermore," or perfected as the High Priest of his people, as on that day the High Priests of Israel were consecrated. On the EIGHTH day he "finished transgression;" and thus, by his sacrifice, cleansed his people from sin, which had been typified by the cleansing on that day from the leprosy and from issues, and of the Nazarite who had contracted defilement. On the EIGHTH

* Of Abraham it is said, that "he received the sign of circumcision—a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised," Rom. iv. 11,—not a seal of Abraham's faith, or that he possessed that righteousness, but a seal, assurance, or pledge, of that righteousness, viz., that it should certainly be provided. It is the righteousness of faith, that is, received by faith, and that faith it is declared in this passage, Abraham had. This pledge was therefore properly given on the EIGHTH day, being the day in which that righteousness was to be brought in.

day he, by ONE sacrifice, perfected for ever them that are sanctified ; and this, in a remarkable manner, corresponds with the offering on that day in the feast of Tabernacles of the ONE bullock, although many had been offered on the seven preceding days, denoting both the inefficiency and the gradual vanishing away of the legal sacrifices, which were all to terminate in his *one* offering. On the EIGHT day, on which the dedication of the temple was completed, and on which, according to Ezra, a solemn assembly, after the manner, was held, Jesus Christ having been PERFECTED through suffering, the temple of his body was raised up, and his disciples on that day hold solemn assemblies : and upon the EIGHTH day, and so forward, he (as that priest who, having consecrated himself for evermore, entered into the holiest of all, and “ever liveth to make intercession” for his people) stands at the altar, as the Apostle John beheld him, having a golden censer, with much incense, which he offers with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar before the throne. It should likewise be remarked that the year of jubilee was the 50th year, and not the 49th, which corresponded with the last of the seven sabbatical years. But the 50th year, namely, the year after the sabbatical years, corresponds with the EIGHTH day, that is the first day of the week. In the same manner, the day of Pentecost was the 50th, and not the 49th day.

The institution of the day of ATONEMENT is recorded in Leviticus, xvi., which contains a full description of that anniversary, and of the sacrifices of bulls and goats, whose blood made a typical atonement, prefiguring the truth of the atonement of Jesus Christ, of which the Apostle Paul speaks at large in the ninth

chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where he treats of the typical ordinances of the Mosaic law. On that day the high priest made his solemn entrance into the most holy place, where the ark of the covenant was placed and made an atonement for himself and his house, by washing himself in water, and offering a young bullock. This showed the weakness and imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, the priests being obliged first to offer for their own sins, and afterwards for the sins of the people. Aaron was then to enter within the second veil, clothed in clean linen garments, which were those worn by the ordinary priests, and not in his own vestments. This represented the humiliation of Jesus Christ, but unstained with the least spot of sin. Aaron was then to take two kids of goats for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering. These kids were to be procured at the common expense of all, out of the treasury appointed for defraying the charges of the sacrifices, and other things necessary for the worship of God. Both belonged to one sacrifice for sin. Both were an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the people. Lots were to be cast upon both, the one for the Lord, the other for the scape-goat. That goat which fell to the Lord was to be prepared for a sin-offering, and after it was killed, its blood was to be carried within the veil, with which the high priest was to sprinkle both the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat, seven times, which denoted the fulness and sufficiency of the sacrifice that was required for expiating sin. Thus, an atonement was to be made for the holy place, and for the tabernacle of the congregation, "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Then the live goat was brought forth,

when the high priest laid both his hands on its head, and over it confessed the iniquities of the people. In this manner, all their iniquities and all their trespasses were laid on the goat, which was sent away into the wilderness, bearing the iniquities of the children of Israel, into a land not inhabited. All this was a typical representation of Jesus Christ suffering for the sins of his people and making atonement for them.

Jesus Christ, who is frequently in other places called a lamb, on account of his meekness, patience, and holiness, is here represented by the emblem of a goat, on account of the sins of his people, for which as their surety he undertook, and of his coming in the likeness of sinful flesh. Both goats are to be viewed as types of the great propitiation. The first goat was an emblem of Christ sacrificed, and was given to Aaron by the people. Jesus Christ was given to men by God; yet what he offered, namely, his human nature, he took from man, being raised up by God from the midst of his brethren, Deut. xviii. 15. Jesus Christ was bought with thirty pieces of silver, which were taken from the treasury. Both the goats were presented to the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and Jesus Christ presented himself to God, saying, "Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will, O my God." The goat which by lot fell to the Lord was slain. But as God orders the disposal of the lot, Prov. xvi. 33, so Jesus Christ also was delivered to death by the determinate council of God, Acts, ii. 23, and iv. 28. The slain goat was burned in the sacred fire, and in like manner Jesus Christ was burned by the fire of the Divine wrath kindled against sin. The burning of the flesh and skin of the goat was performed without the

camp; Jesus Christ also suffered without the gate. Thus his humiliation and sufferings were typified by this goat.

By the same goat also the exaltation of Jesus Christ was represented. Aaron entered into the sanctuary with the blood of the goat; Jesus Christ, having made an offering for sin, entered into heaven, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Aaron entered within the veil with the censer and incense; Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, to appear and intercede there in the presence of God. There was no entrance possible for Aaron without the blood of the expiatory sacrifice; neither did Jesus Christ enter into the holy place without blood—not of bulls or of goats, but with his own blood—whereby he obtained eternal redemption. The blood of the goat was to be sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat, and so that blood remained in the holy of holies; Jesus Christ appears always in heaven with his blood, which is the “blood of sprinkling, speaking better things than that of Abel.” Hence it is that John saw a lamb standing before the throne, as if it had been slain, Rev. v. 6. For though Jesus Christ was once dead, and liveth for evermore, yet he is represented in heaven as slain, on account of the virtue and efficacy of his death; while his intercession is a continual representation of his merits and death before the Father. That an expiation was to be made by blood for the holy place itself, and for the tabernacle of the congregation, signifies, that God cannot dwell in the sinner without the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ, and that heaven itself would be polluted, if sinners were to be admitted there without an expiation. Thus, Paul affirms that “the heavenly things

are purified with better sacrifices." Not that there is any impurity in heaven, but that it is not consistent with the Divine holiness to admit sinners, unexpiated by the blood of the Redeemer, into the communion or participation of his glory, nor for him to dwell with them. Therefore Jesus Christ said, when he departed, "I go to prepare a place for you." There was to be no man in the tabernacle when Aaron made the atonement, which emphatically showed that atonement for sin is made by Jesus Christ alone, and that not even in appearance must any other be joined with him in his mediatorial work.

The living goat sent away into the wilderness, completes the whole of this typical representation. Aaron laid both his hands on the head of the goat. This pointed to Jesus Christ, who was devoted in the eternal decree, on whom all the sins, transgressions, and iniquities of his redeemed people were laid. "*The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.*" "*Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows,*"—"the chastisement of our peace was upon him." "*He hath made him to be sin for us.*" "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.*" Thus, the sins of the people of Israel were confessed over the head of the goat, and they were laid upon it. The goat was sent away into the wilderness. This was typical of Jesus Christ, who has borne away all the sins of his people into the wilderness of oblivion and forgetfulness, never more to come into the mind of God, who casts all their sins behind his back, and into the depths of the sea. He blots out their iniquities, transgressions, and sins, as a thick cloud, never to be remembered against them.

“The goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited.” No one shall ever speak or hear of them any more; and, in like manner, on account of the transfer of the sins of his people to the Redeemer, and his bearing them away, *“the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found,”* Jer. l. 20. When the scape-goat had been sent away, bearing upon him the iniquity of the people, Aaron put off his linen garments, and, having washed himself, put on the rich garments peculiar to him as high priest, called by the Jews the golden garments, and offered the burnt-offering for himself and the people, which completed the expiation, and thus represented him who, having made full atonement for his people, appears as the glorious High Priest, who hath for ever perfected them as sanctified. The whole, then, of this sacred expiation consisted of two parts; first, the slaying of the one goat, whose blood was shed to expiate the sins of the people, and then the sending away of the other goat, which took away the sins that were laid upon it by the sacrifice just offered. In the slain goat the true expiation for sin was represented; in the other, the effect of this expiation; and thus, what could not be so fully represented by one act, is set before us in this remarkable typical appointment, on the great annual day of atonement in Israel.

Besides the rest which the land of Israel enjoyed every seventh year, it was also to rest every fiftieth year; when it was neither to be tilled nor sown, which was the year of JUBILEE. *“And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of seven Sabbaths of years shall*

be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet to sound throughout all the land,"

Lev. xxv. 8. Thus the trumpet was to be blown on the day of atonement, on which the expiation of the Messiah was clearly exhibited, in the goat that was slain, and in the goat that was sent away, on which was laid the sins of the people. "*And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof. It shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man into his possession; and ye shall return every man unto his family.*"

The usual toil and labour to which man is subjected on account of sin, was then to be remitted; servants were to be released and delivered from bondage; and all were to return into the possession of their inheritance, which they had forfeited. In all this a typical representation of the preaching of the gospel is exhibited, and Jesus Christ is pointed out, who came to *proclaim liberty to the captives, and to preach the acceptable "year of the Lord,"* and who, after he had made atonement for sin, appointed his Apostles to blow the trumpet of the gospel, and to publish the glad tidings of salvation. Thus he proclaims to all who labour and are heavy laden his blessed rest. He proclaims freedom to them who are the slaves of sin and Satan, and brings them into the glorious liberty of the children of God; and to those whose original inheritance had been forfeited, he proclaims not the reinstating them in possession of the inheritance they had lost—according to the type which here falls short of the reality—but of an inheritance far more glorious

which he has acquired for them. Accordingly, looking forward to the substance of which the jubilee was a shadow, the prophet exclaims, "*O blessed are the people who know the joyful sound ; they shall walk, O Lord, in the brightness of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day ; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted,*" Psalm lxxxix. 15. And as the Jubilee trumpet was to be blown "*throughout all the land*" of Judea, so the Gospel trumpet shall be blown throughout all the world ; and its sound shall wax louder and louder. "*And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the out-casts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem,*" Isaiah, xxvii. 13.

The most striking display of all the typical representations was exhibited in the KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. The people of Israel, the law which, in the hand of a Mediator, they received, the Covenant that was made with them, their various religious and political institutions, and the different occurrences which happened to them, were all types of those things that belong to the Christian dispensation. Their being chosen of God to be his people, was a type of the election of believers. Their being sprung from one as good as dead, and descended from twelve men, typified the origin of believers in the Christian Church, as springing from one who was dead, and as being the spiritual children of the twelve Apostles. Their servitude in Egypt was a type of the servitude of sin. Their deliverance from Egypt, and their passage through the Red Sea, in which they were all baptized into Moses, and their

coming out of the water, was a type of the spiritual deliverance of Christians when they are brought from the power of Satan into union with Jesus Christ, and buried with him by baptism into death, and raised up with him from the dead. Their journey through the wilderness was typical of the journey of believers through this world as strangers and pilgrims exposed to many trials. The river Jordan, through which the Israelites passed to enter the land of Canaan, was a type of death, through which the people of God must pass to enter their heavenly inheritance. Jericho, of which the walls fell flat at the sounding of the trumpets of Joshua, was a type of the empire of the devil, which shall at last be entirely subverted by the voice of the Apostles, who are the trumpets of Jesus Christ. As the Israelites, by the command of Joshua, put their feet upon the necks of the kings who assailed them, so Jehovah Jesus will bruise Satan under the feet of his people shortly. The first-born of Israel, consecrated to God, to whom belonged the double portion, and also the near kinsman, who, if an Israelite died without children, was to marry his widow to raise up seed unto his brother, that his name might not perish, who as the *goel*—kinsman redeemer—was to bring back his possession if he had alienated it, or to redeem him if he had sold himself to another man, or if an Israelite was murdered, to avenge his blood, were types of the nature and office of Jesus Christ, who is the first-born of every creature, and the kinsman redeemer of his people.

The whole of the ceremonial law, with all its numerous services and ordinances, were figures, as we have seen, which represented the mysteries of the

Christian dispensation. Aaron and all his sacrifices, prefigured Jesus Christ and his salvation. The victims and oblations represented either the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, or the spiritual sacrifices of his people. The solemn feasts all referred to the spiritual feast, which the people of God celebrate under the reign of the Messiah, and that glorious rest to which they shall be elevated after the last judgment. The people of Israel, then, separated from all the rest of the world, and imbodyed as a nation, of which God himself was the king, to be a peculiar treasure to him above all people, a kingdom of priests and an holy nation (Exodus, xix. 5), formed an eminent type of the kingdom of God under the new dispensation; of those who are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people to show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light, 1 Peter, ii. 9.

Such a typical representation as that first covenant exhibited, was well adapted to the state of the world before the appearance of the Messiah, "when the day broke and the shadows fled away." Its ordinances, called "the rudiments of the world," which, if ultimately rested in, conducted only to death, were indeed "weak and beggarly elements," inasmuch as they could only "sanctify to the purifying of the flesh," and as no spiritual benefit could be derived from them, except in so far as they were typically understood. But in this manner they proved effectual to the salvation of many; and were the means of maintaining the knowledge and worship of the true God, in the midst of an apostate and idolatrous world, as well as of preparing the way for the coming of the Messiah. They were "the

middle wall of partition," and served as a bound hedge around the nation of Israel—a barrier against that flood of iniquity which had overwhelmed every other nation on earth, and against which, owing to man's proneness to transgress, the spiritual light, which had been vouchsafed and transmitted by oral tradition, did not avail. "The law was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." In Christ the veil is done away. And "we all," says the Apostle, "with open [unveiled] face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Lord of the spirit." The *spirit*, then, is now made manifest, and the former dispensation, which, every way suitable to existing circumstances, was glorious in itself, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory of that dispensation that excelleth, to the introduction of which it was, however, mainly conducive, and the nature of which it continues to this hour to illustrate.

When Paul contrasts the ministry or service committed to Moses, with the service committed to the Apostles, he calls the first the ministration of the *letter*, and the second that of the *spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. Moses put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. The ministration committed to him, was the ministration of condemnation and death, for "the letter killeth." But this *letter*, or outward form, in which spiritual blessings were veiled under sensible images and carnal ordinances, was useful and necessary in itself, while it remained in force. Every part of it regulated the conduct of the people of Israel, remind-

ing them of their natural ignorance, their depravity, and their dependence on God, and of their need of his unmerited favour and mercy, for the pardon of their multiplied transgressions. It was likewise calculated to lead forward their minds to that new and more spiritual dispensation, to which, on the appearance of another prophet like unto Moses, they were instructed to look. In the mean-time, that covenant bore visible marks of imperfection. Something, so far as it was concerned, was still wanting. There was a manifest imperfection in the sacrifices that were offered, which could not make the comers thereunto perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, and a striking disproportion between the value of the blood of bulls and of goats, and the malignity of sin ; while the repetition of the same sacrifices every year, and the infirmity of those who presented them, plainly intimated, that by their means guilt was not removed. But in this constant representation of its removal, a pledge was given of what was at length to be effectual for this end.

The typical use of the kingdom of Israel to prefigure the Messiah, his kingdom, and salvation, is treated of at large in the Epistle to the Hebrews. That Epistle was written to convince the believing Jews, that the law, as containing a shadow of good things to come, had passed away, now that these good things had arrived. The Apostle announces his design in what may be termed the Key of the Epistle, when, in the beginning of the 6th chapter, he says, "Let us go on unto *perfection*," or the finishing, meaning the completion of the plan of redemption, by the introduction of the new covenant, the perfection of which it is the object of the Epistle to contrast with the imperfection

of the old covenant. This expression, which occurs so frequently in the course of his discussion, is the same with that used by the Lord, when he said in his last intercessory prayer, "I have finished [*perfected*] the work which thou gavest me to do;" and when he bowed his head on the cross, and said, "It is finished," or *perfected*.

"The law made nothing *perfect*," Heb. vii. 9. The legal service was a figure, ix. 9, for the time then present, which could not make him that performed it *perfect*, as pertaining to the conscience.—"The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto *perfect*," x. 1. *Perfection* was not by the Levitical priesthood, vii. 11, for whatever was connected with it served only unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, and Moses, when about to make the tabernacle, was admonished of God, "For see, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the Mount," viii. 5. It was necessary, therefore, that the *patterns* of things in the heavens should be purified with the blood of animals, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these, ix. 23. But Christ being come, an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more *perfect* tabernacle, is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the *figures* of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, ix. 11, 24. "It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation *perfect* through sufferings," xi. 10. And being made

perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, v. 9. "The law maketh men high priests, which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated [literally, *perfected*] for evermore," vii. 28. "By one offering he hath *perfected* for ever them that are sanctified," x. 14. He is the author and *perfecter* of faith, xii. 2. Arrived at all that is connected with this perfection, we are come, says the Apostle, "to the spirits of just men made *perfect*,"* by the work of Jesus, xii. 23. Without that work, which has been performed in our days, and testified by us, they could not have been made *perfect*, xi. 40. Thus, from a variety of considerations, Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, has proved the weakness and imperfection of the legal priesthood and sacrifices, and also their typical import; and his concluding argument is, that the Holy Ghost had plainly intimated this imperfection, when, by the prophets, he declared, that the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, Heb. viii. 8—x. 15, through which remission being obtained, all further offering for sin must consequently cease. Jesus Christ, therefore, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, is the end or *perfection*, Rom. x. 4., (the same expression in the original as that so often used in the

* This does not mean that they were made perfect in holiness and happiness, according to the usual explanation of the passage; although that is indeed true—but made perfect as to their *title* to heavenly glory. This did not take place till the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was offered, though, in the certain prospect of its accomplishment, they had received the blessings which flow from it long before; otherwise what would be the meaning of Hebrews, xi. 40? Both passages, then, are in strict accordance with the object the Apostle has in view throughout the Epistle.

Epistle to the Hebrews), of the law, to whom it pointed, and in whom its typical design was consummated.

The law, then, “contained a shadow of good things to come,” and “the priests that offer gifts, according to the law, served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.” “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual.” This mode of gradual development—of a literal and mystical signification, of making natural things represent spiritual things, and the one to precede and lead on to the other that was to follow—while it served the immediate purposes of regulation and instruction, furnishes demonstrative evidence of a consistent and premeditated plan. Accordingly, this last is one principal use which is made in the New Testament of the numerous typical representations of the Old. To these they call men’s attention, as they do to the prophecies, to prove, that what had at length taken place, was only the grand consummation of what had long been shadowed forth.

The above are a few specimens of the numerous shadows and types of the ancient dispensation. They were figures “for the time then present,” serving in that period their appointed purpose, but chiefly intended to adumbrate what was afterwards to take place. The Old Testament Scriptures in all their histories, in all their miracles, in all their laws and institutions, in all their parts, comprise a picture or model of what was afterwards to be imbodyed—they are a mirror in which is reflected whatever in the future economy has since been realized. Every doctrine and every duty which is now more fully unfolded, is there, as we have seen, figuratively taught and enforced. The whole

typical system, then, is of very great importance, demanding particular attention ; and the Christian who does not carefully consider it, is neglecting one great means of edification. It affords a striking display of the wisdom and foreknowledge of God. The study of this peculiar mode of instruction is, therefore, most important, as well for information, for encouragement, and for warning, as for evidence to the Christian religion, the truth of which it establishes in a manner no less astonishing than incontestable.

CHAPTER X.

THE PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT CONCERNING THE MESSIAH.

CONNECTED with the typical representations which prefigured the Messiah and his redemption, the Old Testament Scriptures contain a series of promises and predictions, by which his advent was foretold. By this means, a body of evidence, of the strongest and most unexceptionable description, was provided from the earliest times. As the exhibition of miracles affords demonstrative proof of the operation and finger of God, so the fulfilment of prophecies equally denotes similar interposition. The knowledge of future events belongs to God only. On this ground is founded the challenge to the idols of the heathen nations, recorded by Isaiah, xli. 21, “*Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us*

what shall happen. Let them show the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them, or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." Isa. xlii. 9, "Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things I do declare : before they spring forth I tell you of them."

The coincidence of a certain event with a particular dream or conjecture, dignified as it might be with the appellation of a prophecy, of which we meet with a few detached instances in profane history, can impress no conviction of Divine interposition. It would be more remarkable were such coincidences never to occur. But the prophecies of the Scriptures claim a very different kind of regard. They are not referable only to a few instances, neither are they of an insulated or desultory nature. Delivered and distinctly recorded through a long succession of ages, they consist of an immense number of predictions, linked together in a connected series or chain, and terminating in one grand object, to which they conduct us through an almost endless variety of subordinate events. Some degree of obscurity, however, always belongs to prophecy, which is not intended to make men prophets, or to interfere with human agency, but to afford proof, in its fulfilment, of the truth of what it is intended to verify. If in the prediction there were no obscurity, it would in many cases defeat its purpose, and the event might be supposed to be brought about by those who were interested in the accomplishment. In order to attain the end of serving as evidence, a prophecy should be so constructed as to leave the main circumstances of the event in a certain

degree of darkness before its fulfilment, but to be so clear as to be intelligible after the event predicted has taken place. The veil, then, of apparent obscurity, which distinguishes prophecy from history, is a proof of wise contrivance, and what on the first view increases the obscurity, on due enquiry increases the evidence and determines the meaning of the prediction.

That mixture, then, of light and obscurity which is observable in the Scripture prophecies, and which is so wisely adapted to the object in view, affords an internal mark of their authenticity. Forged prophecies, formed upon past events, are generally so clear as to be without a veil. Under the most studied concealment, it is apparent that the history has been converted into prophecy. This is remarkably the case with respect to the corruptions in the Sibylline oracles, introduced by some early Christian writers. There is nothing of the darkness of the true prophets in the compositions of those who forged predictions after they were accomplished. Had the heathen world, before the coming of Christ, really possessed, as they did in the third century, the prophecies of the Sibyl, they would have enjoyed a much clearer revelation with respect to the manifestation of the Messiah than the Jews themselves possessed. This shows that the prophecies of the Old Testament were not the work of men, for they are formed upon a plan different from that which human wisdom would have adopted. On the other hand, the obscurity of the Old Testament prophecies is not the obscurity of heathen oracles, when they wished to conceal their ignorance of futurity. The obscurity of the pagan oracles couched no meaning; the obscurity of the prophecies of Scripture was a veil to conceal a truth afterwards to

be fully brought out, and which, when brought out, manifests itself as the meaning. The darkness of Scripture prophecy also is quite different from the ambiguity of the heathen oracles, which might be suited to contingencies of which their authors were ignorant. The answer of Apollo might often be interpreted so differently, as to suit the event in opposite senses. But in the fulfilment of a Scriptural prophecy, there is no room to doubt that the event is the real meaning of the prediction. No forgery, then, either before or after the accomplishment of events, was ever constructed on the plan of the Scripture prophecies.

A like observation may be made with respect to the interpreters of prophecy in every age. There is a general disposition in them to look on the unfulfilled prophecies as much clearer than they are, and to speak of their views of the predicted events with the same confidence as if they referred to facts recorded by history. There is also a manifest proneness in them to make prophecy bear on their own times. The history of the opinions of the interpreters of unfulfilled prophecy, is at once a proof of this proneness in the human mind, and a lamentable manifestation of the opposition of the wisdom of men to that of God. It is, then, one of the strongest evidences that the prophecies of Scripture were not the work of man, that they are not in the style of human wisdom. If, in explaining prophecy, men generally see every thing so clearly that they can admit no doubt, it is evident, with respect to events in the womb of futurity, that if men had formed a scheme of prophecy, they would have accomodated it to their ideas.

While all the surrounding nations were sunk in the

grossest idolatry, that dispensation of prophetic intimation which was vouchsafed to the Jewish people, powerfully contributed to the intended effect of maintaining among them the worship of the one living and true God. The fulfilment of numerous predictions, together with the constant and unequivocal proofs of miraculous interposition which they so often witnessed, and to which their attention was previously called by their prophets, can alone account for the firm adherence of the Jews to the Old Testament Scriptures—an adherence that has continued to this day, although they have so much misunderstood the real meaning of these sacred records. This strong conviction of the Divine origin of the Word of God is entirely distinct from the knowledge of that system of truth which it contains. The former, as we witness every day, may be firmly held, most conscientiously contended for, and ably exhibited, by men who are altogether in error respecting the latter. Many tenaciously and sincerely take to themselves the name of Christians, who are ignorant of the doctrine of Christ. Many have written ably and forcibly on the evidences of Christianity, who knew nothing of true Christianity. Many will say to Christ in the last day, “ Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then he will profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” It was to this state of mind that our Lord adverted respecting the Jews, when he declared that they trusted in Moses, while they did not believe him. “ Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses ye

would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

Prophecy pervades the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures. In the first period, from the history of the creation till Samuel's time, although many instances of the prediction of future events occur, they are not so frequent as afterwards. But, from the days of Samuel, a succession of prophets was raised up, and their predictions became more clear and minute as the time of their accomplishment drew near.

This system of prophecy divides itself into three branches. One branch consists of prophecies relating to the Jews and the neighbouring nations, most of which were fulfilled during the period of the Old Testament dispensation. Prophecies of another branch have a twofold interpretation, and refer to two distinct accomplishments; the one more immediate and subordinate, before the coming of the Messiah; the other at, or after his coming, which is the ultimate and principal object. The prophecies of a third branch refer solely to the Messiah and the times of the gospel.

Nothing could be more completely adapted than this arrangement, to answer the design of prophecy. Had there been no prophecies of the first branch, and had the fulfilment of all the predictions been deferred till the time of the Messiah, the Jews, to whom the prophecies were delivered, would not have been furnished with that evidence of their truth, which was necessary to command their confidence. But when they witnessed the exact accomplishment of so many of these prophecies, some pronounced in their own age,

and others, which stood on their records from more distant periods; and when, from time to time, they observed the inspiration of their prophets put to this decisive test, and not failing in one single instance, they received the strongest pledge that those predictions, which referred to their expected Messiah, and to times more remote, would also be fulfilled. Those prophecies again, which, having a twofold accomplishment, point to two distinct objects, served the purposes both of the first and last branches, each of which had only single events in view. In their first fulfilment, they verified to the Jews of their day their inspired character, and were instrumental in supporting and carrying on the administration of the theocratical government. They also furnished, in that fulfilment, a typical representation of what belonged to their spiritual and principal design in the future economy. The accomplishment of those of the last branch, uttered at a period so distant, and fulfilled in such circumstances as preclude every idea of collusion, exhibits a standing miracle, and furnishes a body of evidence which cannot be impaired so long as the authenticated histories of the prediction and the accomplishment are preserved.

Numerous examples of those prophecies, of which the ancient Jews witnessed both the annunciation and the fulfilment, are to be met with in the different books of the prophets. Some of them took effect almost immediately after they were delivered, or within one or two years; and others at more distant periods. The prophecies to Ahab of his death, and to Hezekiah of the prolongation of his life, and of protection from Sennacherib, are instances, among many others, of such

as were almost immediately accomplished. The prophecy of Joshua respecting Jericho, the fulfilment of which is recorded nearly 500 years afterwards ; the prophecy concerning Josiah the king, delivered above 300 years before he was born, and accompanied by the rending of the altar of Jeroboam, as an immediate sign of the certainty of its accomplishment ; and the prophecy of the founding of the temple by Cyrus, delivered by Isaiah and Jeremiah, and the fulfilment recorded by Ezra, at the distance of nearly 200 years, are instances of the prediction and accomplishment of more distant events.

Prophecies which have a twofold accomplishment abound in every part of the Old Testament Scriptures. A great portion of the book of Psalms is of this description. Many of the Psalms relate the experience of David and of the people of God in his dealings with them, their trials, their afflictions, and consolations. But a greater than David is often there. Under the name of David, and in the account of his troubles and persecutions, of his government, and his kingdom, its privileges, permanence, and extent, Jesus Christ is pointed out, and his humiliation and sufferings, his exaltation and redemption described. Some of these delineations belong more fully, some entirely to David, others exclusively to the Messiah. But many of them clearly indicate the twofold interpretation, and show that the first object intended has not exhausted the import of the prophecy ; and that we must go on to the second, in order to comprehend the whole that is designed. Sometimes one part of the prophecy refers to the first, and another part to the second ; so that making a reference to both, we must

assign a distinct portion to each. At other times, the description of both is so blended, that in all the parts we have a twofold fulfilment plainly set forth.

There are frequently in the same discourse certain things which relate to what is ultimately intended, and not to its figure or typical representation ; and others that relate to the figure, and not to what it designs. In speaking of the spiritual redemption, the prophets often intermix with it the temporal deliverance of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon, in such a way, that sometimes what they say can only belong to one or other of them ; sometimes to what is common to both. Jesus Christ has adopted this prophetic style in his predictions in Matthew 24th, and elsewhere, respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, the calling of the Gentiles that accompanied it, and the day of judgment, because the first fulfilment of the prediction was, in truth, the figure of one still more remarkable.

From not attending to one or other of these different senses of this branch of the prophecies, many have erred in contrary extremes. One party see in them no other object but the Messiah, and so not only fail to observe the beauty and utility of the twofold interpretation, but also lose much of the benefit to be derived from contemplating a true portrait, drawn by the Holy Spirit, of the experience of other believers, with which they might compare and confirm their own. Another party, erring in a more hurtful extreme, discern nothing further than a faithful delineation of the state and circumstances of men of like passions with themselves. Into the first of the above errors, Christians are chiefly led, by observing that it is often with reference only to their ultimate design, that these prophecies are quoted in the

New Testament. Overlooking this circumstance, they point to these quotations as certain proofs of the soundness of their interpretation ; although this manner of quotation only results from the connexion in which the prediction is brought to view. When an Apostle passes over the primary sense, which had long before been received, it is no disparagement to that sense, nor an indication that he does not admit what had been previously and universally acknowledged.

In the case of the prophetic declaration of Nathan to David concerning Solomon, we have an example of the prophecies of the twofold interpretation, 2 Sam. vii. 12, 17. This prophecy evidently refers to Solomon, who was to be set upon the throne of Israel as soon as the days of David were fulfilled ; and in this sense it is applied to him by David near his death. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the same prediction is applied to the Messiah. In the first instance, it referred to Solomon, in whom, as a type, it was, in its subordinate sense, partially fulfilled. But it was ultimately and fully accomplished in his antitype, who was to build a house very different from the temple at Jerusalem, and whose kingdom, in his own person, was, in the most absolute sense, to endure for ever. This accomplishment is expressly referred to in the 89th Psalm, where the prediction, much enlarged, is evidently applied to the Messiah, and in this sense it is quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In the same manner, the spiritual meaning of typical representations is often quoted by the Apostles. When Moses came down from the Mount, he put a veil on his face, to conceal the shining of his countenance, on which the Israelites could not look. Paul, in the Se-

cond Epistle to the Corinthians, introduces this circumstance of the veil ; but, passing by the literal sense, he speaks only of the spiritual import of that action, both as it referred to Moses and to the people of Israel. This veil concealing the glory of Moses's face, and the inability of the people to behold it, signified that carnal commandment called the "letter," 2 Cor. iii. 6, under which the "spirit" that belonged to the new dispensation was concealed, to which, as the end or object of that commandment, the Israelites, in general a carnal people, who would have been dazzled with its glory, could not steadfastly look. In the same manner, the description in the 19th Psalm, of the sun in the firmament, has a strictly literal and primary meaning ; but it is also typical of him who is called the Sun of Righteousness, who, by his word, is the spiritual light of the world. The Apostle, therefore, in the 10th chapter of the Romans, quotes this description in the last sense, substituting for their line, or the orderly course of the sun and other celestial bodies, their sound or voice ; thus taking the spiritual meaning which was ultimately intended. This suits his object in that place, while he drops the literal, although a just and acknowledged sense. It is not then as setting aside the literal application of such passages that the Apostles quote them in their spiritual import, nor in the way of accommodation, as is often erroneously asserted, but in their ultimate and most extensive significations.

Nothing has been more mischievous, more audacious, and more dishonourable to the character of Revelation than the doctrine that represents the New Testament writers, as quoting the Old Testament prophecies by way of accommodation. It is based on the supposed

difficulty or impossibility of explaining the agreement in the literal accomplishment. To this, it may be replied, that satisfactory solutions of the cases of difficulty have been given. But, though no satisfactory solution were given, the supposition would be inadmissible. It contradicts most explicitly the Spirit of God, and must be rejected, let the solution be what it may. The new Testament writers, in quoting the Old Testament prophecies, quote them as being fulfilled in the event which is related. If it is not truly fulfilled, the assertion of fulfilment is false. The fulfilment by accommodation, is no fulfilment in any sense of the word. This interpretation, then, cannot be admitted, as being palpably contradictory to the language of inspiration. To quote the Old Testament prophecies in this way, could not in any respect serve the purpose of the writers of the New Testament. What confirmation to their doctrine could they find from the language of a prophecy that did not really refer to the subject to which they applied it, but was merely capable of some fanciful accommodation? It is ascribing to these writers, or rather to the Spirit of God, a puerility, of which every writer of sound judgment would be ashamed. The application of the language of Scripture by way of accommodation, is a theory that has sometimes found patrons among a certain class of writers. But a due respect for the inspired writings, will ever reject it with abhorrence. It is an idle parade of ingenuity, even when it coincides in its explanations with the truths of the Scriptures. But to call such an accommodation of Scripture language a fulfilment, is completely absurd. There is nothing in Scripture to warrant such a mode of explanation.

The third branch of prophecy relates solely to the times of the Messiah. "*The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*" To him give all the prophets witness. The glory of his person, the importance of his work, its progress and completion from the beginning to the end of time, is the grand theme of prophecy, to which every other part of it is subordinate. As this branch contains such a body of evidence to the truth of revelation, and so many divine attestations to him who came to fulfil the law and the prophets, it is necessary to trace it at some length. And in order to give a connected view of that series of predictions which refer solely to the Messiah, some of the prophecies that belong to the second branch will also be introduced.

The Prophets, with one consent, gave witness to Jesus Christ; and nothing remarkable befell him, and nothing great was either said or done by him, which they did not foretell. The Apostle Paul protested that he said none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come. Thus, the reality, when it took place, exactly corresponded with the predictions that had long before been delivered, for it became the wisdom and goodness of God to give such an exact description of the Messiah, with all his marks and characters, that he might be known and distinguished from all manner of impostors who should ever usurp his character or counterfeit his name.

By the dispensation of the prophecies, the dignity and grandeur of the Messiah were proclaimed, so that it might not be imagined that he was an ordinary person. In every view it was proper that so great and admirable an event as the incarnation of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, of him who was to

renew the face of all things, should be marked by due intimations of his appearance. By these prophecies, too, God was pleased to nourish and support the faith and hope of his ancient church. For since all the elect of God since the foundation of the world, even to the coming of his Son, were to be saved by his satisfaction and merit, it was necessary that some knowledge of him should be given from the beginning. The ancient church had the same relation to the first coming of Jesus Christ, and the times of the Gospel, as we have now to his last coming and to the period of future glory. As, then, it is necessary in order to sustain our hope, and to nourish our faith, that we should have some knowledge of the good things reserved for us, and that we should know with certainty that Jesus Christ will come again, so, in like manner, it was necessary, in order to the faith of believers under the former dispensation, that they should be assured of the first coming of the Messiah, and that they should have some knowledge of the greatness of the blessings that he was to bring to them. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul, speaking of the elders, says, that they had not received the promises, but that they saw them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them. Jesus Christ says of Abraham, that he saw his day and was glad; and to his Apostles he said, Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for, verily, I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them.

By the prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, God has laid a firm foundation for the faith of his people, in causing the preceding ages to render testimony to his Son. For one of the most important proofs of the

Christian religion, and which marks that God is its sole Author, is the connexion between the Old Testament and the New ; and the same predictions which support the faith and hope of the people of God, serve as a subject of condemnation to all unbelievers.

Of the prophecies contained in the Old Testament which regard the Messiah, some refer to his person, some to his first advent, and others to its consequences. Of those which refer to his person, some mark his quality as the Son of God, others his divine, and others his human nature, his abasement, his exaltation, his prophetic, his priestly, and his kingly character. Of those which mark the circumstances of his advent, some speak of the time, others of the place of his manifestation. Some relate to his forerunner, others predict his actions ; some mark the manner of his death, and others of his resurrection. Of the prophecies which relate to his advent, some speak of reconciliation with God, and the blessings of his grace ; others of the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews ; others of the ruin, particularly of Judas, and of his persecutors who crucified him. In general, it may be remarked, that as the time of the coming of the Messiah approached, the prophecies concerning him become more distinct, more circumstantial, and appeared in greater number.

The earliest intimation of a Redeemer was given to our first parents immediately after the fall, in the following sentence pronounced on the tempter. “ And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field ; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and

between thy seed and her seed ; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," Gen. iii. 14, 15. The serpent had been the instrument employed in the temptation, and on that animal the sentence of a corresponding punishment and degradation was carried into effect. The curse pronounced upon it was typical, and similar to that which Jesus Christ pronounced on the fig-tree on which he found no figs ; for the serpent, considered simply as an animal, was not, any more than the fig-tree, a subject of condemnation, being not a subject of law. But as under the figure of the curse of the fig-tree was represented the curse of God upon the Jews—that mystical tree which he had planted—so under the figure of this curse pronounced on the serpent was represented the curse of God upon the devil, who was to eat the dust, that is to say, to hold his course in the midst of all impurities, griefs, and degradations. That this was the case, is evident from the whole tenor of the Scriptures, in which the devil is uniformly spoken of as the seducer and murderer of man, and as having introduced death and all that misery and confusion which prevail in the world. Isaiah denominates him "the *serpent*" whom the Lord will punish ; and in the book of Revelation he is called "that old *serpent*, who is the Devil and Satan."

The sentence, directed against the tempter of the human race, mysteriously opened to man a prospect of the greatest blessings. Although the malignant and powerful spirit who spoke through the serpent, had overcome the woman in the first assault, God was now to set them in opposition to one another. Satan had triumphed over the weakness of that sex, and from it was to proceed one who was to destroy that direful

empire which he had established. "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman.*" These words apply particularly to the woman, and not to the man, and signify that God would put in that sex the first germ of the war which should take place, and which was to issue in the ruin of Satan. It is added, "*and between thy seed and her seed.*" This intimated the division in the human race that was to be occasioned by the entrance of sin. The woman was to have an offspring which should stand in opposition to Satan, but Satan was also to have a progeny that should belong to him. Here that enmity that has existed between the children of the devil and the children of God, which was exerted to the utmost when he, who was emphatically called the seed of the woman, appeared, and which, from the days of Cain and Abel, the two first men that were born, to the present hour, has been written in characters of blood, is at once referred to and accounted for. The seed of the woman is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who, by this singular designation, which is not found in any other part of Scripture, is indicated, because he was to be "made of a woman"—born of a virgin, without any participation of man. It was thus that God was pleased to cause the confusion of Satan to proceed from that sex, which he had made use of to subvert the whole economy of nature. "*He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" Jesus Christ, that blessed seed of the woman—that triumphant deliverer, who was to spring from the general mother of the human race, and so was to stand equally related to Jews and Gentiles, has bruised the head of the serpent, that is to say, has destroyed his empire, and has wrested from him that authority which he had usurped

in the world, and on account of which the Apostle Paul calls him the *god of this world*. On which it may be remarked, that God does not say absolutely that the seed of the woman will put the serpent to death, or deprive him of all motion ; for although that must take place at last, yet this prediction principally regards the first coming of the Messiah, and not the second, referring to the destruction of the empire of the devil, by the cross of Jesus Christ, and the publication of his Gospel through the world. But as serpents do not cease to have motion and action when they have their head bruised, in like manner, although the empire of Satan be destroyed, he does not cease to be the tempter and persecutor of believers, and to do them much evil. There are therefore two victories which must be obtained over him—by the first, his head has been bruised under the feet of Jesus Christ, and by the second, all the rest of his body shall be bruised under the feet of his people. This prediction speaks of the first of these, and Paul speaks of the second, Rom, xvi. 20, “ *The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*” These terms, the “ God of Peace,” should be remarked ; for, in the first prediction, God speaks as the Lord of Hosts, the God of War—“ *I will put enmity.*” The war continues till the empire of the devil is overthrown, and when it is subverted, peace is made, and God is the God of Peace.

As to the latter expression, “ *thou shalt bruise his heel,*” we see that accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ, with respect to his human nature, which was in him as his earthly and least noble part, and most distant from authority, from majesty, from the source of motion, of action, and of life. It was against his

human nature that the devil was to display his force, and it is to be observed that the prophecy does not say thou shalt pierce his heel, which, it may seem, should rather have been said, but *thou shalt bruise his heel*, making use of the same expression that had been employed to express the action of Jesus Christ against the devil, because in truth, in the same manner that Jesus Christ has displayed his invincible and infinite force to overwhelm the devil and to overthrow his empire, so likewise the devil has displayed all his force to overwhelm Jesus Christ in his human nature; and, as the head of the serpent has been bruised by the power of Jesus Christ, so the human nature of Jesus Christ has suffered dissolution and death by the rage of the devil. When the head is crushed, the body cannot re-establish itself; on the contrary, the crushing of the head very speedily becomes fatal to the whole body, but when the heel is bruised, and the head remains entire, nature is in a state to re-establish itself. In like manner, the destruction of the empire of the devil will necessarily be followed by complete ruin, while Jesus Christ, having only suffered in his human nature, has been quickly re-established by virtue of that divine nature which was beyond the reach of the enemy. On this account the Apostle Peter says, that he was put to death in the "flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." An evident allusion is made to this prediction concerning the Messiah, in the 110th Psalm, where it is said, "*Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*" And who are the enemies of the Messiah but the serpent and his seed, between whom and the seed of the woman there was to be eternal enmity? Afterwards, when it was said that Jehovah

hath sworn to the Messiah, saying, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec," it is added, that "He shall judge among the nations, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies, he shall wound the head over a great country." This, applied to the Messiah, represents the ruin of the empire of the devil, which he usurped by the fall of the first man, in evident allusion to the declaration, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.

In that early and remarkable prophecy which we have been considering, a compendious view is given of the whole Gospel. As verified in its fulfilment it is strikingly exact, and totally inapplicable to any thing besides that has ever taken place in the world. The whole revelation of God, made at different times during a period of 4000 years, till the canon of the Scriptures was completed, is only the gradual development of this prophetic intimation which is still going on to its final accomplishment. It entirely corresponds with the description of Jesus Christ given by the Apostles. "He came to destroy the works of the devil." "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil."

Another prophecy respecting the Messiah was delivered immediately after the flood, at the beginning of the new world, as the former had been given at the beginning of the old. This prediction was uttered by Noah, on the occasion of his being employed by God to pronounce a curse upon one of his descendants, who appears to have been of the seed of the serpent.

“ And he said,
 Cursed be Canaan ;
 A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.
 And he said,
 Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem ;
 And Canaan shall be servant to them.
 God shall enlarge Japheth,
 And shall dwell in the tents of Shem ;
 And Canaan shall be servant to them.”

This prediction, as it refers to Canaan, shall be taken up in another place. At present we are to consider it as it applies to Shem. The blessing here pronounced on Shem is, that God should be his God, and should DWELL IN HIS TENTS. The posterity of Ham and Japheth soon fell into idolatry ; but the descendants of Shem were preserved in the worship of God. Shem was the father of the Hebrews, and God established his covenant with Abraham, who was one of them, promising “ to be a God to him and to his seed in their generations.”

This remarkable blessing was all along strikingly verified in the history of Israel, the descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac, till the Messiah appeared among them. God said, “ I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God ; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them : I am the Lord their God,” Ex. xxix. 45.

The dwelling of God in the tents of Shem here promised, was shadowed forth to Israel, by the manifestation of the divine presence in the pillar of cloud and of fire. The element of fire had been used from the beginning as a token of the presence of God. It

appeared at the expulsion of our first parents from paradise, as a flaming sword; at the making of the covenant with Abraham, as a burning lamp; and at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, when "the Lord descended upon it in fire." The pillar of cloud and of fire guarded and conducted the Israelites out of Egypt, and in the wilderness, rested on the Tabernacle, and dwelt between the cherubim in the first Temple.

When David was not permitted to build the temple, as he intended, the Lord said, "I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another," 1 Chron. xvii. 5. On the dedication of the temple, Solomon said in astonishment, "Will God in very deed dwell with man on earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house which I have builded?" 1 Kings, viii. 27. As soon as Solomon made an end of praying, "fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house," 2 Chron. vii. 1. In that house, God dwelt in the cloud, amidst the darkness of which the rays of divine effulgence shone forth, which indwelling the Jews expressed by the term *Shechinah*. The *Shechinah*, or cloud of glory, was the visible symbol of the Divine presence, the fulness of the Godhead, which was to dwell bodily in the man Christ Jesus. This symbol the second temple did not possess, but concerning that last house it was declared, "I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts," Hag-

gai, ii. 7. Accordingly, in that second temple, of which he took possession as his Father's house, Messiah himself appeared.

Another prophecy of the same import with that of Noah, was delivered by Zechariah, 500 years before the coming of Christ. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo I come, and I will DWELL in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people, and I will DWELL in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me unto thee," Zech. ii. 10. Of the accomplishment of those predictions, in their fullest and most important signification, the Apostle John, a descendant of Shem, at length informs us. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, —and the Word was made flesh and DWELT among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," John, i. 14. The word here translated "dwelt," literally signifies tabernacled, or DWELT AS IN A TENT. The word tabernacle is used in Scripture to signify the human body, 2 Peter, i. 14.

The fulfilment of Noah's prophecy has been exact. It was fulfilled to a certain degree all along, and figuratively illustrated for many ages. It was ultimately accomplished in its most extensive import in Jesus Christ DWELLING in human nature among the descendants of Shem—God manifest in the flesh, whose descent, according to this prediction, was at the beginning of the new world restricted to that line. But now the promise thus fulfilled, is no longer confined to one branch of the human race. The blessing of Abraham,

the heir of the world, is come upon all nations. God now DWELLS among his people of every descent. "Thou hast ascended on high," said the Psalmist, addressing the Messiah, "thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might DWELL among them," Psalms, lxxviii. 18. The pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, which indicated to Israel the presence of God, no longer rests exclusively on the tents of Shem. The period is come of which it was declared, "The Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all, the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert, from storm and from rain," Isaiah, iv. 5. —"I will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her," Zech. ii. 5. The *Lord* Jesus Christ now dwells in his people's hearts by faith, Eph. iii. 17, and they are "an habitation of God through the *Spirit*," Eph. ii. 22. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John, iv. 16.

The next prediction concerning the Messiah was delivered to Abraham, from whom it was declared he should descend. This gracious promise was repeated to him at different times; and on occasion of his offering up his son Isaac, it was renewed in these words, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the

stars of heaven, and as the sand that is upon the sea-shore ; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," Gen. xxii. 16. This prophetic declaration does not terminate in Abraham, or in his posterity, taken literally, but must necessarily be referred, in its full and ultimate accomplishment, to the Messiah, who is Jesus Christ.

In this covenant there are five principal things to be considered. 1. I will bless thee. 2. The multiplication of a posterity as the stars of heaven, and the sand upon the sea-shore. 3. That his seed should possess the gate of his enemies. 4. That all the nations of the earth should be blessed in his seed. 5. The oath by which all their promises are ratified and confirmed. These five things are of such a nature that each of them furnishes convincing proof that this covenant regards the Messiah, and must be considered as a prophecy respecting him. It is not indeed to be supposed that the words of this covenant had not a respect to the Israelites after the flesh ; on the contrary they regard two future covenants, of which the one was included in the other, namely, the temporal covenant, which referred to the Israelites, and the evangelical, which respects all believers, and of which the former was a type and figure. At present our attention is directed to the words of God to Abraham, only as they include a promise respecting the Messiah.

The first thing they contain is the blessing which God promises to Abraham. This blessing has its full and ultimate accomplishment and effect only in Jesus Christ, who is the blessed of God, not only because God has elevated him to a greater degree of glory than

can be conceived, but also because he has made him the source of every blessing to man. "Blessed," says the Apostle, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Eph. i. 3.

The multiplication of a posterity, numerous as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea, has also its full accomplishment in Jesus Christ, whose posterity comprehends all the elect from the beginning to the end of the world, who are the children of his blood, the mystical fruit of the travail of his soul. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed." Isaiah, liii. 10. And immediately after it is explained what is meant by this posterity, that they are those whom he shall justify. The number of his posterity may well be compared to the stars of heaven and the sand on the sea-shore.

That his seed should possess the gate of his enemies, applies in all its extent to Jesus Christ, who reigns over principalities and powers, over whom he triumphed on his cross. His enemies are the devil with his idols, his superstitions, and his crimes, with which he has filled the world. Jesus Christ possesses their *Gate*, having destroyed all their power, and having wrested from them that authority which they had unjustly usurped, and this he has done by the light of his Gospel. His enemies too are idolatrous and wicked men, and Jesus Christ possesses their gate in two ways; one in respect to those whom he converts, since they voluntarily submit themselves to his authority; the other in respect to those who remain wicked and unbelieving, whom he subjects to the order of his providence, making use of them according to his good

pleasure, in order to execute his purposes. His church also possesses the gate of her enemies, as she has part in the victories and sovereign authority of Jesus Christ, her Head and Saviour.

The fourth promise so clearly belongs to Jesus Christ, that it is not possible to refer it to any other, either in part or in whole. "*In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*" When we consider all the force of these words, it appears manifestly that they could only have their full accomplishment in one divine person, infinite and elevated above all creatures. Whence it follows that they must belong to one and not to many. The term seed, then, is used here in an individual sense as the Apostle Paul affirms, and as it is employed in other parts of Scripture. It is distinguished from the many nations that were to descend from Abraham, for in it all nations were to be blessed; and it is distinguished from Isaac, when it is promised that it should come in his line, and also when to Isaac himself the same promise is afterwards renewed. It, therefore, refers to that individual descended from Abraham, in whom alone this prediction is verified. It appears to have been the purpose of God, by here using the term, seed, which he had employed in the first promise of the Messiah, where it is said, "He shall bruise thy head," to show that the same person who was designed in that first prediction, is also pointed out here with less generality; for the seed of the woman is an expression which suggests an idea more general and extended than this of the seed of Abraham, which is more particular and limited. The blessing to be conferred, in which Abraham himself was included, is the blessing of *righteousness*, which comes

by the Messiah through faith. Abraham, we are told, believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. And not only to him; but also to all who have the faith of Abraham, this promise has, or shall be accomplished.

The oath by which all these promises are ratified and confirmed, marks the grandeur and importance of this prophecy both as it respects God and man. When God swears, he swears by himself. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord." To swear by himself is to call to witness the whole of his divinity—to interest all his perfections in the matter in question. This universal appeal to his attributes can only take place in something which, in the most peculiar manner, has respect to his sovereignty and glory. If we were to refer the above predictions to any other than to Jesus Christ, we could not but remark a disproportion altogether unworthy of God—a great and august seal, the most majestic of all characters, applied to an affair of secondary importance—but in referring it to Jesus Christ, we at once discern that just proportion so worthy of the wisdom of God. For as there is nothing so august, so great, so inviolable, as the oath of God, there is nothing so admirable, so majestic, so heavenly, as the everlasting covenant, which the Father has made with Jesus Christ, his Son, and with all believers in Jesus Christ. It is a never-ending, an eternal covenant; it is a covenant which elevates the glory of God to the highest point; it is a covenant which communicates to man a real salvation; a heavenly felicity; a glorious immortality; it is then well worthy of the oath of God.

The occasion on which God made the above great promises to Abraham, was after he had called him to

sacrifice his son Isaac. It is not to be questioned that there was a mystery in this part of the Divine conduct, and that his wisdom intended that under this shadow or veil we should discover that all the great promises which compose the covenant with Jesus Christ, that the blessing which he possesses, that the multiplication of his posterity, that the victory and domination over his enemies, and finally that the diffusion of his benediction over all nations, come only in consequence of his sacrifice, and that they all spring from the blood of his cross. On this it is to be remarked, that there being several things that preceded his exaltation, as the union of his two natures, his miracles, his sufferings, although these are noted in many other prophecies, there is not one of them referred to in the prophecy before us. Here there are only those things that regard his exaltation and the preaching of his gospel throughout the whole world, that is to say what has followed his death, and nothing that preceded it. The wisdom of God has thus appointed it, because this covenant was announced to Abraham after the sacrifice of Isaac, and because God purposed to make it known, that the secret meaning of this prediction regarded Jesus Christ after the sacrifice which he was to offer to God for man's redemption.

The same promise that had been given to Abraham with a limitation to the line of Isaac, was repeated to Isaac himself. And about a hundred years after being first announced, it was again made in the same form to Jacob.

The next prophetic promise of the Messiah was uttered by Jacob on his death-bed, when, in blessing his twelve sons, he singled out Judah as the progenitor of the Messiah. "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren

shall praise. Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; and thy Father's children shall bow down before thee. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen. xlix. 8. Here it is proper to remark, that Jacob, in blessing his sons, does not foretell what would happen to them personally, but what would take place respecting their posterity. And what is affirmed is the more remarkable, as Judah was then only a shepherd, and in no respect elevated above his brethren. This prediction not only restricts the descent of the Messiah to *one* of the numerous family of Jacob, but limits a period for his appearance. And that pre-eminence now bestowed on Judah, whom his brethren were to "praise," and before whom his Father's children were to bow down, which after Jacob's death was given to the tribe of Judah, was continued to it till the coming of Jesus Christ.

The tribe of Judah was first in offering its gifts at the Tabernacle, as well as in the order of encampment of the tribes. In the journeys of Israel, it was appointed to march foremost. Moses denominated it the "Lawgiver." David declared that God had chosen Judah to be the "Ruler." The royalty was granted to Judah in the person of David and his descendants, and this tribe communicated its name to the remnant of the other tribes. Jerusalem, the chief city of Judah, was the capital of the whole nation, where the government was established, where the Temple was built to which all the other tribes resorted to worship; where alone the sacrifices were offered, and where the services that pre-figured the Messiah were performed. And the sceptre

did not depart from Judah till Shiloh came, and to him has been the gathering of the nations. The explanation of this prophecy depends on three things; namely, what is meant by Shiloh, who was to come; next, what is that sceptre and lawgiver which Judah was to retain till Shiloh came; and, lastly, what is that gathering of the people that Shiloh was to effect.

To the term, Shiloh, different significations have been ascribed, as the peaceful or giver of peace, the person sent, he whose it is, he to whom it is reserved. Or, as according to many of the Rabbis, his Son, that is the Son of Judah, thus named by way of eminence, because although Judah had many descendants who might be called the sons of Judah, yet the Messiah being the most glorious among them, he is called his son in a peculiar sense, as he is called the seed of Abraham, and to him only has been the gathering of the people. Whichever of these meanings is adopted, the first Jews and all Christians have applied the term Shiloh to the Messiah. The time of the coming of Shiloh was to be before the sceptre should depart from Judah, or a lawgiver from between his feet.

According to this prediction, the tribe of Judah was to subsist under its own government and laws, without being despoiled of its authority, till the Messiah should come. And this was fully verified. The interruption of the seventy years of captivity in Babylon was not an extinction of the natural government of Judah, nor an abolition of his sceptre, since they had in the interval a government of their own under the king of Babylon, and were re-established at the end of seventy years, so that there was, at most, only a temporary suspension. But the meaning of the prediction is not that such a

suspension should not take place, but that the sceptre of Judah, the form of his government, should not be absolutely and totally taken away, nor suffer an entire extinction, until Shiloh came. Accordingly, when Jesus Christ appeared in the world, and when he dwelt among the Jews, that people lived under their own sceptre, and had their own legislators. It is true that this sceptre was considerably shaken when Judea was joined to Syria, under the deputy whom the Romans sent there, and besides, the Roman Emperor sent a governor into Judea, who transacted every thing in his name. On this account, we read that when one of these governors said to the Jews, "Behold your king," they answered, "We have no king but Cæsar;" and when Pilate said to them, "Take ye him and judge him according to your law;" they answered, "It is not lawful for us to put any one to death." But however much their sceptre was thus shaken, still they formed a distinct body of people; they were in possession of their own country; they were governed under the Romans by their own laws; they had their own judges, their own magistrates, their Sanhedrim, which was their senate, and thus it could not be said that their sceptre and legislator had absolutely departed. But this soon afterwards happened; for within less than forty years after the death of Jesus Christ, Jerusalem and all Judea were taken and despoiled by the Roman armies, and the whole of the people dispersed in such a manner, that they have no more been collected into a body as a nation; they have not possessed a country, they have not had the power of exercising or enacting their own laws, or of living under any form of their own government. All this evidently shows that Shiloh is

the Messiah promised ; for their present dispersion, which has now continued nearly eighteen hundred years, cannot be considered as merely a suspension of the rule of their sceptre, as that which took place during the Babylonish captivity.*

The gathering of the people to Shiloh, can only mean the calling of the Gentiles, so often predicted in various parts of the Scriptures, and which is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, for he has come to gather into one the children of God, and under his reign there is but one flock, and one Shepherd. Here then we have a most remarkable prediction of the coming of the Messiah, which limits the time of his appearing. Jacob, uttering, by the Spirit of God, particular and minute predictions respecting each of his twelve sons, which were all afterwards verified, singles out one of them, declares his pre-eminence over his brethren, and that he should be invested with power, and continue to enjoy it, till one should descend from him, to whom the gathering of the nations was to be. And all this verified through the whole intervening period, was fully accomplished at the distance of about 1690 years.

In conformity to the above prediction, is another declaration to the same effect, in the first Book of Chronicles, "The genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birth-right, for Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief Ruler." 1 Chron. v. 1.

Above 200 years after the death of Jacob, another

* Here is a conclusive argument against the Jews that the Messiah is come,—that for more than seventeen hundred years Judah has possessed neither sceptre nor legislator. For hence it follows that Shiloh promised by Jacob has come.

prediction of the Messiah, descriptive of the office that he should bear, was delivered by Moses to Israel: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.—I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." Deut. xviii. 15, 18.

This prediction announced by Moses, marks a prophet in the singular number, and not a certain order of persons, such as the ordinary prophets whom God sent to his people. It is declared that this prophet shall be like unto Moses, and this is repeated twice. Among many other points of this resemblance that might be noted, we may briefly remark four particulars. First, Moses was a deliverer of the people of God, in a manner that was very glorious, accompanied with miracles—a deliverer from a state of the most degraded servitude, and of the deepest misery—a deliverer who, in freeing them from slavery, set before them the possession of the land of Canaan. Second, He was a mediator of a covenant betwixt God and the Israelites, speaking to the people on the part of God, and to God on the part of the people. Third, he was a legislator who established a law and a form of religion, under which the people were placed. Fourth, He formed an ecclesiastical society, assembling them into a body, as a church. It is certain that God never raised up any other prophet, with the exception of Jesus Christ, in whom these four characteristics meet. We must there-

fore necessarily regard the above words as a prediction which can only find its accomplishment in the person of the Messiah, that is to say, in Jesus Christ. He alone delivers the people of God from a state of servitude, more miserable and more cruel than that of Egypt. He effects this deliverance under the title of the Prophet of God, immediately sent by him. He does it with miracles and infinite power, in obtaining a complete victory over the enemies of our salvation, as Moses did over the Egyptians. He does it with the blood of propitiation, as Moses did with the shedding of blood. And in thus delivering his people, he sets before them the possession of a New Canaan, even the heavenly. Besides all this, Jesus Christ is the Mediator of a new covenant, not only as he makes known on the part of God the mysteries of his will, and on the part of men presents their acquiescence in it to God; but also as he joins and reconciles the two parties, who before were enemies, on account of which his blood is called the blood of the everlasting covenant. He is besides a legislator, like unto Moses, having given us that holy and inviolable law, namely, his gospel, to be the rule of his people's faith and conduct; and having left a religion and divine service, which he has accompanied with promises and threatenings, proposing on the one side eternal life to those who receive it, and on the other, denouncing death and eternal damnation to those who reject it. And finally, Jesus Christ has been the author and founder of a new church, a new society of men, whom he has bound together by sacred ties, after having delivered them from their former servitude. Of this assembly, he himself is the head and the leader, to conduct it to the heaven-

ly Canaan ; and before introducing it there, he guides it through a wilderness, in which he feeds it, not with the fruits of the earth, but with the heavenly and the hidden manna.

As the prophet who was promised, Jesus Christ is, like Moses, appointed by God himself, not by a mission emanating from men, like the priests and scribes, not with human preparations, such as was the case with some of the ancient prophets in their schools, but instituted solely by God himself. He was also taken from among his brethren, which marks the human nature of Jesus Christ, and also that he should be born among the Jews, being the son of Abraham and of David. And lastly, the commandment is given to *hear him*, which marks his sovereign authority over the Church, and his infallibility ; for we are not bound to hear without limitation any one who is not infallible, and whose word is not the word of God. It notifies too, that this prophet was to silence every voice but his own ; the voice even of Moses and of the ancient prophets, in order that the attention of men might be solely directed to him ; for we cannot listen to the voice of two prophets at one time. In Jesus Christ, then, and in no other, the prediction before us has been accomplished.

Thus, even in establishing the first covenant with the people of Israel, intimation was given that from among themselves another prophet was to arise, who should supersede Moses ; and this prediction applies only to Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant. No other Jewish prophet ever pretended that he was like unto Moses, to whom the Lord “spake face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend,” Exod. xxxiii. 11. The law, too, that was given by Moses,

was declared by all the succeeding prophets of Israel, to have continued in force in their day. Malachi, the last of them, in connexion with a clear prediction of the Messiah, and of his forerunner, says, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb, for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments," Mal. iv. 4. And it continued in force till after that Moses, the giver of that law, and Elijah, its most eminent supporter, had appeared, in the presence of witnesses, on the mount of transfiguration, conversing with Jesus Christ, when a voice from heaven announced, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, HEAR HIM." In Jesus Christ, then, this prediction was accomplished. He was raised up from the *midst* of Israel. *Like* Moses, he was found in fashion as a man. *Like* Moses, he was to speak the words of God. But he was to be a prophet greater than Moses, whose words were to be in force till *He* should appear, after which the people were to turn from Moses, and to *hear Him*.

In the time of Moses, a general prophecy concerning the Messiah's appearance in a distant age, was uttered by Balaam, when Balak, king of Moab, had sent for him to curse Israel, but whom God commanded him to bless. "And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam, the son of Beor, hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said, He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes opened, I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Seth," Num. xxiv. 15. Two things

are evident in this prophecy. The one is, that it cannot refer to the people of Israel as a body, nor to Moses, nor to any of those illustrious persons whose history is contained in the Old Testament. The other is, that it has its full and entire accomplishment in Jesus Christ the Messiah.

These expressions, "I shall see him, but not now ; I shall behold him, but not nigh ; there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel," prove that Balaam does not speak here of the nation of Israel, for he beheld them ranged according to their tribes, as is expressly noted in the second verse of the same chapter. They refer, then, to some person who was not yet born, and whom Balaam beheld at a distance, that is, in the obscurity of future ages. That this star was to proceed from Jacob, and this sceptre to arise from Israel, mark that a particular person is spoken of, who was to be born in the midst of the Israelites. The term Star, denotes that he was to be brilliant as a star—brilliant with a celestial light, fixed and permanent, incapable of alteration, like that of the stars ; which could not be said of Moses, nor of Joshua, nor of David, nor of any of the Kings of Israel ; because, whatever glory they had, and whatever great acts they performed, these were not permanent, and their glory belonged more to earth than to heaven. The expression, a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, marks not the person of a king who receives the sceptre from the hand of his predecessors, but a royalty that is singular, different from that which is ordinarily established among men. It is added, he shall destroy, or, rather, he shall rule over all the children of Seth ; which evidently proves that this prediction can neither apply

to all the nations of the Israelites, nor to any of the illustrious men who governed it, for the children of Seth are universally all men, at least all the descendants of Noah; for Noah, who descended from Seth, was the only one who, with his children, was saved from the deluge. This prediction then has four characters; first, it designates a person far distant from the time of Balaam, who was not to appear till long after his age. Secondly, it denotes a particular person, to whom the qualities of a star should belong, namely, its splendour or glory, its celestial nature, and its permanent light, incapable of being extinguished. Thirdly, it indicates an extraordinary form of royalty, different from that of others: and, fourthly, it denotes a reign which was to extend over the whole earth. These four characters can belong only to the Messiah.

But it is evident that all these four are fully verified in the person of Jesus Christ. His greatness and dignity render him an object worthy to be revealed from distant times by the Spirit of God, by whom it is expressly declared, that Balaam was inspired at this time. Between the birth of Jesus Christ and the time in which Balaam lived, there was to elapse a long series of ages. Jesus Christ is a singular person, so magnificent and glorious, that, appearing from a distance as he did to Balaam, he might properly be represented under the image of a star—namely, of a new star, which, at a very distant period, should begin to appear and to honour the earth with its rays. When Malachi, the last of the prophets, saw him, on his nearer approach, it was under the semblance of a *Sun*; but to Balaam, who viewed him from afar, he appeared as a *Star*. The

condition, or the nature of Jesus Christ, like that of the stars, is altogether heavenly, on account of which, the Apostle Paul calls him the *Man from Heaven*; and he himself often declared that he came down from heaven. "No one," he says, "came down from heaven, but the Son of Man who is in heaven." The reign of Jesus Christ is different from that of all those kings who ever appeared in the world; different in its object, for the natural purpose of other reigns is the temporal preservation of their subjects, but that of Jesus Christ is their eternal salvation. The kings of the earth reign over the bodies of men;—Jesus Christ reigns over their consciences. The kings of the earth reign by earthly weapons;—Jesus Christ by his word and Spirit. The reign of earthly kings subsists by the succession of many persons; Jesus Christ, on the contrary, has neither successors nor predecessors. Finally, the sceptre of Jesus Christ is swayed over all the children of Seth—that is, over all the people of the earth, as it is said by David,—Ask of me, and I shall give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth; and, as he himself declares, all power is given to him in heaven and in earth.

A very distinguished prophecy is contained in the Book of Job, in which he expresses his firm conviction of the self-existence and future appearance of the Messiah. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold him, and not another," Job, xix. 25, 26. These words were uttered

by Job, after an introduction which marks their importance. "Oh, that my words were now written! Oh, that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!" This introduction, which calls for attention in a manner so singular and extraordinary, shows that Job had something to say of the greatest importance, and his desire that it might be graven in the rock, and perpetuated, proves also that what he had to say was a prophecy which regarded future times, and whose use would be perpetual. It is further to be remarked, that the term, Redeemer, used in this place, where the future resurrection, and the state of man after worms have destroyed his body, that is to say, after death, must signify a spiritual and eternal redemption, and not a temporal deliverance, such as Job afterwards obtained from the mercy of God. From the whole of his preceding discourse, it appears that he had no hope of again enjoying that prosperity of which God had deprived him; and it is clear that his hope was more elevated, and that he intended to say, that even when he must die under the weight of that affliction, he would still hope for salvation from God. Hence it follows, that when he calls the author of that spiritual salvation his Redeemer, he has respect to the redemption of the Messiah, who is the Redeemer of both our souls and our bodies, not only because he delivers them from eternal death, and communicates a blessed life, but also because he delivers them with the price of the infinite value of his blood. God is indeed sometimes called the Redeemer of Israel, on account of his delivering them from their bondage in Egypt. But the term, as used here, furnishes full

proof that the resurrection of the just, and their eternal felicity after death, is the real redemption spoken of, and consequently the work not of the law, but of grace—not of Moses, but of the Messiah—not of God as the author of nature, but of God as the author of the gospel.

Job says he knows that his Redeemer liveth, or is living. This term is opposed to death, to the death of this same Redeemer, as the God of Israel is called the “Living God,” in opposition to the gods of the heathen, which are dead. And it is proper to remark, that the idea of a true and real redemption includes the death and the life of Him who redeems; for, in order to redeem sinners, it is necessary to die, as this redemption can only be effected by the propitiation of a sacrifice. But it is also necessary to live after death, otherwise the propitiation would not be complete, and consequently there could be no real redemption. “My Redeemer liveth”—that is to say, he died to pay the price of my ransom; and because his ransom has had its effect, he has come forth victorious from death. The term liveth, also stands in opposition to the death of Job, as if he had said, I do not doubt that I shall die, which is the consequence and certain fruit of sin, but I shall rise again, because I have a living Redeemer—that is to say, one who not only lives himself, but will give life to those whom he hath redeemed. This can only refer to the Messiah. Job adds, that he shall stand at the latter day, or shall remain the last upon, or over the earth. This includes three things—the first is, that we all die except the Redeemer, who will continue always living, in order that, from his life,

the resurrection of believers may flow, as from a new source. The source of our natural life is Adam; but Adam is dead, and in his communion we all die. But God has provided a new source of life in this Redeemer, in order that he may restore and raise from the dead all who are in his communion; for "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." "He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth"—shall stand over the earth in the latter day, or shall remain the last on the earth, which signifies that he shall execute the last and universal judgment, as if he said, all men shall die, and from death they shall pass to judgment, for death must precede the judgment. Job thus indicates that all men shall die, and shall be shut up in the same prison of death to be judged; but the Redeemer shall remain the last upon the earth, he shall not die, he shall remain alive, because it is he who must judge all creatures. It signifies, besides, that he will gain a complete victory; as if Job had said, he will combat all my enemies, and will conquer them one after another; the last which shall be overcome is Death, over which he will triumph in raising me up; and then not only hell, the devil, sin, the flesh, the world, shall be subdued by him but death itself shall be swallowed up, and the Redeemer shall remain master of the field of battle.

When Job says, I shall see God for myself, and mine eyes shall behold him, and not another, it is evident that he speaks of the eyes of his body—of that same body, the resurrection of which he looks for. It follows, that this is one of the most magnificent prophecies that can be found in the Old Testament; for it clearly establishes it as a truth, that God will render himself visible to the eyes of the body, and that in that form he shall

come to judge the world, and to be seen by Job himself, who lived many ages before the appearance of the Messiah. This declaration, that God will render himself visible to the eyes of the body, includes all the mysteries of the Christian religion, and connects with what the Apostle John has said, that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory," and "what our eyes have seen, and our hands have handled of the word of life." To which may be added the declaration of the Apostle Paul, that great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.

About four hundred years after the time of Moses, the descent of the Messiah, which before had been confined to the TRIBE of Judah, was by another prediction limited to the family of David, an INDIVIDUAL of that tribe. This prophecy, announced by Nathan to David, has been already referred to among the prophecies to which a twofold interpretation belongs. It was also delivered at great length in the 89th Psalm, where it commences with these words, v. 3, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." From a variety of passages in the Psalms, it appears, that David clearly understood, that his seed here spoken of was one greater than Solomon, and that this prophecy belonged only to the Messiah. And all the succeeding prophets, long after the death of Solomon, and after the building of the Temple which he erected, looked forward to another son of David, to another house, and to another throne.

Nearly 300 years after the above prediction was delivered, the prophet Isaiah again limits the descent of the Messiah to the family of David. "There shall come

forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse (the father of David), and a Branch shall grow out of his roots," Isaiah, xi. 1. This chapter contains an evident prediction of the Messiah, and it is not possible to understand it in any other sense. It is divided into two parts. The first is a description of the reign of the Messiah. The second predicts the calling of the Gentiles. In the former, the prophet marks the family from which Jesus Christ was to spring, namely, the family of David, and that same family of David so reduced, that there remained nothing more of it than the roots. This is contained in the first verse. The second declares the infinite abundance of graces which were to belong to his person. The third, the sincerity and faithfulness of his judgments. The fourth, his mercy towards the righteous, and the vengeance with which he would visit the wicked. The fifth shows that justice and faithfulness shall be inseparable from his reign. In the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th verses, the profound and admirable peace of his reign is described, for which it is given as a reason that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." In the remaining part of the chapter, the calling of the Gentiles is spoken of, which is described in the language of conquest. All this it is impossible to understand but in reference to the Messiah; and in the person of Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, it has a full accomplishment.

The term "*Branch*," used in the above prophecy, is frequently afterwards applied in the Scriptures to the Messiah. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute

judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely ; and this is his name wherewith he shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness," Jer. xxiii. 6. These words are repeated, chap. xxxiii. 15, 16, with this difference, that the name "Jehovah our Righteousness," which in the former passage is given to the Branch, is here attributed to Jerusalem, that is, to the Church of God. This prophecy applies only to the Messiah, of the family of David ; and the title Righteous shows his character, which, in its strict sense, belongs to no other king. After the Jews returned from the captivity of Babylon, they had no more a king of the race of David. This Righteous Branch, then, can only be Jesus Christ, the son of David according to the flesh, who came into the world when that family was entirely reduced, although not extinct. It is said, his name shall be called "Jehovah our Righteousness," which signifies that this King was to justify his people, and consequently that he should obtain for them a true salvation, and a real peace of conscience, which can only consist in the peace and love of God ; but Jesus Christ alone can give this to his people. The name here given to him establishes beyond dispute the divinity of his person. This title, given to the Messiah in an active sense, is ascribed to the Church passively. It is the Righteous Branch of David which justifies his people with his righteousness, and they are justified with this righteousness of Jehovah by means of their King.

At length, in contemplation of the coming of the Messiah, the prophet Isaiah announced in plain language, the meaning of the expression in the first intimation of mercy, "the seed of the woman." "Behold

the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," chap. vii. 14. Under the reign of Ahaz, he and the people of Judea were filled with the greatest consternation, on hearing of a confederacy against them by Syria and Israel. The prophet Isaiah was sent to comfort them. Taking with him his son, whose name signified, "a remnant shall return," which indicated the determination of God to save his people, he assured Ahaz that the purposes of his enemies should not stand, but that they should be destroyed. The message, however, failing to give confidence to Ahaz, he was desired to ask a sign, "either in the depth or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." Ahaz having thus, through hypocrisy, rebellion, and ingratitude, refused to ask a sign, the prophet, on the part of God, testifies his indignation. "And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign, Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat until he know to refuse the evil and choose the good. But 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," Isaiah, vii. 14.

The sign then is this,—that the Messiah should come, that he should be born of a virgin, that his name should be Immanuel, that he should eat butter and honey, that is to say, should live in a plain and simple manner, and be brought up like other children, living on the food produced on the mountains and in the plains of Judea—a proof that Jerusalem should not

then be invested by enemies—until entering on the discharge of his office, he should make a great and extraordinary separation between the righteous and the wicked, rejecting the latter, and cutting them off from the covenant of God, and choosing others in their stead. The attention of Ahaz and his people was thus turned from the present alarming appearances, and directed to the certainty of the predictions concerning the Messiah, in the fulfilment of which their preservation was involved. It remained on their records, which they had received from their ancestors as the infallible Word of God, that the sceptre was not to depart from Judah until Shiloh came; and God had promised to David, that of the fruit of his loins Christ should sit on his throne. The extraordinary circumstance now announced, which was to be connected with that great event, together with the assurance they had just received from the prophet, was sufficient to banish their fears, and to satisfy them not only as to their surviving the present confederacy, but as to the stability and duration of their government.

In this illustrious prediction, the prophet refers to three characteristics of the Messiah. One is his being born of a virgin—a virgin shall conceive. Another is the New Covenant, or the communion of God with men—they shall call his name Immanuel, God with us, both of which are quoted by Matthew, i. 23. The third is the great distinction which he should make among men, rejecting the wicked and choosing the good, which is expressly declared by his forerunner John the Baptist, Matt. iii. 11, 12; and the event, in that great separation which Jesus Christ made by the preaching of his Gospel, rejecting as chaff the greater

part of the Jewish nation, and reserving only a small remnant, fully corresponded with the prediction. Thus the Apostle Paul, after having quoted what God had said, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal," adds, "Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." He also quotes what Isaiah had said to the same purpose, Rom. ix. 27, 30.

The prophet Micah, who prophesied about the same time with Isaiah, in denouncing a threatening against the Jews on account of their sins, also intimates the birth of the Messiah, though in language less plain, when he says, "Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel," Micah v. 3. That this prediction refers to the Messiah is evident, because it immediately connects with the following plain declaration concerning the place where he was to be born: "And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be the ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." He then adds, "Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed (or rule) in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth, Micah, v. 2, 4. This prophecy marks the place of the birth of the Messiah, viz. Bethlehem. Bethlehem Ephratah, or Bethlehem Judah, to distin-

guish it from another place of the same name, was the native city of David, that great personal type, as well as the progenitor, of the Messiah. It was now declared to be the birth-place of David's Son, who was also David's Lord. The Jews would be given up to be harassed by their enemies until the time when she—the virgin spoken of by the prophet Isaiah—that was to travail with child, should bring forth this deliverer, when the chosen remnant of his people should be united under him as the Israel of God. This prophecy then marks also the end or destination for which the Messiah should come, viz., to be ruler in Israel—that is to say, over his church. It declares his divine nature, and the ineffable majesty of his person—whose goings forth have been from eternity. In the former clause, he was spoken of as coming forth out of Bethlehem according to his humanity; and in this latter clause, his everlasting coming forth from the Father signifies his eternal co-existence with the Father as his only begotten Son. “The words,” says Lowth, “do naturally import an original, distinct from the birth of Christ, which is here declared to have been from eternity; for so the word translated here *from of old*, but rendered *from everlasting* [Hab. i. 12], and the words rendered from the days of eternity, do plainly signify.” This prophecy proclaims also the stability and duration of his reign—“he shall stand and rule in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.” It marks also the extent of his dominions—“he shall be great unto the ends of the earth.” The circumstances that afterwards led to the fulfilment of this prophecy, respecting the birth-place of the Messiah, was a decree published by

Augustus Cæsar, for a general enrolment throughout the Roman empire. On this occasion, the mother of Jesus, who then resided at Nazareth of Galilee, was under the necessity of going to Bethlehem with Joseph to whom she was espoused, to be there enrolled, because they were of the house of David; and there she brought forth her son. Thus the Roman government, totally unconscious of it, was employed to minister, by its decree, to this accomplishment of the purpose of God.

At the birth of the Messiah, a circumstance took place in Bethlehem, which was also the subject of prophecy. Herod being informed that he who was called King of the Jews was born there, being alarmed at the prospect of danger to his government, probably from fear of some popular commotion, and supposing that he could cut off the occasion of it at once, sent and slew all the children of the place who were under two years old. Nearly 600 years before this slaughter of the infants, the prophet Jeremiah, xxxi. 15, by a bold and beautiful example of personification, suited to the style of prophecy, introduced Rachael, the wife of Jacob, who had been buried between Ramah and Bethlehem, bitterly lamenting this catastrophe. "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachael, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."* Mary and her son, before that slaughter took place, had removed

* This is a prophecy which, like many others, had a double fulfilment; the first regarded the destruction occasioned by the Assyrians, the second the slaughter by Herod of the children at Bethlehem.

from Bethlehem ; but it is worthy of notice, that, owing to this circumstance of the slaughter of these children, the date of the birth of the Messiah was precisely fixed, and all pretensions to that character were cut off, which might have been set up by any other born there at that time, which, by another prophecy, was fixed as the period of his appearance.

Although born at Bethlehem, the Messiah was not to continue there. Galilee was to be the principal place of his residence, where especially his heavenly doctrine was to be taught, and so many of his wonderful works were to be performed. This circumstance was also intimated by the prophet Isaiah : “ Nevertheless, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light ; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.” Isaiah, ix. 1, 2. This prophecy is immediately followed in the 6th verse by a remarkable description of the birth and character of the Messiah, which can apply to no one else. It declares the sudden appearance of a great light among the people, who had just been described as in darkness, and the advantages that would accompany the advent of the Messiah, who is spoken of by the same prophet as being given *for a light to the people*. It is announced in the following words : “ 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 establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever." Isaiah, ix. 6, 7. The words of this prophecy refer to what the prophet had said in chapter seventh respecting Emmanuel, the son of the virgin, and also to the first prediction of the seed of the woman, and to the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations were to be blessed, and to Shiloh—that is, the son whom Jacob had promised,—and to Psalm ii. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." The titles which here follow that are given to the Messiah are such as ought to shut for ever the mouths of the Jews, and to cover with confusion all those who are enemies to the divinity of Jesus Christ. For what mean these expressions—his name shall be called **WONDERFUL**,* **COUNSELLOR**, the **MIGHTY GOD**, the **FATHER OF ETERNITY**, the **PRINCE OF PEACE**—if they do not mark the Divine nature of the Messiah? The words of the seventh verse announce expressly a blessedness and an eternal reign, accompanied with judgment and righteousness, which can only be understood of Jesus Christ, being totally inapplicable to any other king.

The exact *time* of the Messiah's appearance, connected with several other remarkable circumstances, was at length revealed to the prophet Daniel. In the ninth chapter of his prophecies, he states, that having

* The same word "Wonderful," here applied to the Messiah, is in Judges translated "Secret," when the angel, the Angel of the Covenant, the Messiah, who there, as on many other occasions, appeared prior to his incarnation, said, "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" Judges, xiii. 18.

observed that it was predicted by the prophet Jeremiah that the captivity of the Jews in Babylon was to last seventy years, and that these years were now drawing to a conclusion, he addressed himself in prayer to God, beseeching him to remember his people in their affliction. While engaged in confession of their sins, and in earnest supplication, the angel Gabriel announced to him the following minute and comprehensive prediction: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." Dan. ix. 24. This is one of the most illustrious prophecies of the Old Testament, in which the term Messiah, the same with Christ (or Anointed), is employed.

In this vision, Daniel was expressly informed of the

advent of the Messiah,—of the time of his advent,—and of his being cut off. The whole period fixed is seventy weeks, which was to be dated from the going forth of the commandment to rebuild the city. In prophetic language, a day is used to signify a year, as was announced to the prophet Ezekiel, iv. 6, “I have appointed thee each day for a year.” To this way of reckoning the Jews had all along been accustomed. In the law of Moses they were commanded to number seven weeks of years to the jubilee, which was forty-nine years. In this prophecy, the computation is made in the same way, by seventy weeks, or seventy sevens, that is, seven times the length of the period of the captivity of Babylon, in reference to which Daniel had been putting up his supplications. Seventy weeks are seventy returns of the Sabbatical year, or 490 years. This period is here fixed for the continuance of Jerusalem, which was about to be rebuilt, as the holy city where the instituted service of God was performed, when an effectual sacrifice for sin should be offered, which would make an end of sin or sin-offering as heretofore, according to the law; would make reconciliation for iniquity, and introduce *everlasting righteousness*, when the visions and prophecies would receive their accomplishment, and the holy One of God be anointed.

The whole time allotted for these events is divided into three distinct parts. The first is seven weeks, the second sixty-two weeks, and the third one week. Daniel was to know and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, should be seven weeks and three score and two weeks. Here two periods of the seventy weeks are fixed, in which two

events were to take place. In seven weeks, or forty-nine years, the city was to be built in turbulent times; and after the end of sixty-two weeks, that is, 434 years, which, added to the forty-nine years, make 483, the Messiah was to be cut off. This was to happen in the seventieth week, for it was to be *after* the sixty-two weeks. Messiah was then to confirm the covenant; and in the midst of the last, or seventieth week, he was to cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. The hostile invaders (the people of the prince that should come) should make the city desolate till its decisive destruction, which would afterwards take place.

We have here a most remarkable prophecy, delivered above 500 years before the event, which, besides what it declares of the Messiah's salvation, as finishing transgression, and introducing the everlasting righteousness, contains a variety of most important circumstances, all future at the time when Daniel wrote. The following public facts are expressly noted. 1. The commandment to build the city. 2. The building of it. 3. The character of the times during which this was to take place. 4. The coming of the Messiah. 5. The time that was to elapse after the return of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon till his appearance. 6. The express application of the term Messiah, which is the same as Christ. 7. His dying a violent death: he shall *be cut off; but not for himself*; that is to say, not for his sins, but for the sins of men. 8. His making atonement for sin. 9. His putting an end to the legal sacrifices. 10. His introducing the everlasting righteousness. 11. The closing up of prophecy. 12. Its consummation, in his confirmation of it with many who should accede to it. 13. The destruction of the

city and temple. 14. The signal nature of that destruction. 15. The times when all these things should take place specified in their distinct periods.

All this received an exact accomplishment. The commandment to build the city was given to Ezra by Artaxerxes, in the seventh year of his reign, and is recorded in the book of Ezra, and the building of the city was effected. At the set time Jesus Christ, pointed out as the Messiah by a variety of other prophecies, appeared. He was put to death, yet many became his disciples, with whom he confirmed his covenant. The time of the law and the prophets came to an end ; and the legal sacrifices lost their obligation and efficacy. Soon after, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, as by an inundation. The sacrifices then ceased to be offered, even in form. From that day to the present, the Jews have been anxiously desirous to renew them ; but Jerusalem being the only place where these could be offered, and it having been ever since in the hands of their enemies, this has been totally out of their power.

The appearance of the Messiah was also to be marked by the proclamation of a FORERUNNER, who should announce his approach. This circumstance is foretold by the prophets Isaiah and Malachi. After exhorting the people of God to be of good comfort, from the consideration that their conflicts were about to terminate, and their iniquity to be pardoned, Isaiah exclaims, “ The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and

the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together : for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it," Isaiah, xl. 3.* The prophet Malachi, iii. 1, says, " Behold I will send *my messenger, and he shall prepare the way* before me ; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?" Malachi concludes his prophecy, and closes the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures, with calling the attention of the Jews to the coming of this forerunner, and to the effect it should produce. He denominates him Elijah, from his similarity in zeal, temper, and appearance, to that great prophet. " Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the child-

* The words that follow, are these, " The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field : The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it : Surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." They are quoted by the Apostle Peter, and appear to refer not to the vanity of human life, but to that temporal covenant which God had made with the nation of Israel, and all the external advantages which he had granted to them. These were as nothing, and the covenant itself would vanish, so that they ought not to value themselves on these privileges which they had enjoyed by their natural birth, but ought rather to seek for eternal benefits that are conferred by the spiritual birth, which is given by the word of the gospel.

ren to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," Mal. iv. 5.

Thus the forerunner of the Messiah was to go before him, to remove obstacles, and to prepare his way, to proclaim that the glory of the Lord was about to be revealed, and that all flesh (Jews and Gentiles) should see it; and that suddenly (immediately after his forerunner) this messenger of the covenant, the proprietor of the temple, should appear. Contrary to what might have been expected, it was also declared, that the place where this forerunner was to deliver his testimony should be the *wilderness*; while the transient nature of his office is intimated by the manner of his being introduced as a "*voice*," which as soon as it is uttered is gone. All this was literally fulfilled when Jesus Christ appeared, preceded by John the Baptist, "crying in the wilderness of Judea, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Matth. iii. 3.

Before the coming of the Messiah, the Jews were to be brought very low on account of their sins. "And thou profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him." Ezek. xxi. 25. Here it is foretold, that the diadem or crown of Israel should be taken off. Hitherto it had continued in the line of David, but now it should be removed, till *he should come whose right it was*. This overturning is repeated three times. Ezekiel prophesied during the Babylonish captivity; and after his prophecy, three

great overturnings of the world were to take place, before the Messiah should appear,—the first by the Persians, the second by the Grecians, and the third by the Romans. During the dominion of the latter, HE came who was the true King of Israel, whose right the crown was, and on whose head, according to the many predictions of the everlasting stability of his government, it shall remain for ever. “Thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel.—Thus saith the Lord, if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night in their season, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne.” Jer. xxxiii. 17-20.

The great shakings and revolutions among the nations that were to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, were likewise foretold. When, on the return of the Jews from Babylon, the second temple was erected, it appeared so much inferior to the first that the people were greatly discouraged. The prophet Haggai was therefore commissioned to inform them, that the glory of the latter house would be greater than that of the former, for that in it He who was the Desire of all nations was to appear. He also announced, that previously to the coming of the Messiah, God would shake all nations, and intimated how great and how general this shaking would be. “For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine saith the Lord of Hosts. The

glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts. And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts." Hag. ii. 6.

As the second temple was in many respects inferior to the first, it could be greater in no other view but by the coming to it of Him who was the desire of all nations. The cloud which is called the *Glory of the Lord*, had filled the first temple, and God himself, by that symbol had taken possession of it. Within it God gave his answers by Urim and Thummim. In it was the ark of the covenant—the tables of the law written by the finger of God—the golden pot filled with manna which fell in the wilderness—the rod of Aaron which budded. Of any of these there was no trace in the second temple. But what elevated it far above the other, and above all the advantages which the first possessed, was that during the period of its continuance, the Messiah, the Master and Lord of the Temple, the Son of God, the Creator of the Universe, came into the world, and honoured it by his entry and his presence, and that it continued till the establishment of the new covenant, and the calling of the gentiles.

The prophet Haggai adds, "I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them, and the horses and their riders shall come down every one by the sword of his brother," Hag. ii. 22. According as here predicted, so it was fulfilled; and after this period till the coming of Messiah, the greatest revolutions that history records took place. Almost all the nations of the known world were overturned again and again. Thus the world was prepared for the coming of the

Messiah. But when he appeared, the whole was subjected to one powerful government, and a universal peace succeeded these overturnings and convulsions of the earth. Here we see the true reason of the exaltation of the Roman empire. All that has happened in the world, both before and since the coming of the Messiah, has been entirely subservient to the establishment of his everlasting kingdom.

The Person, the Character, and the Office of the Messiah, his Sufferings, his Death, and Resurrection, his Exaltation, and the Progress of his kingdom and religion, are minutely described by the prophets.

Respecting his PERSON, the Prophets, like the Apostles, explicitly teach that he is the supreme God, and that uniting in himself the Divine and human natures, he was to appear in the world as the Son of God, and the Father's servant. They proclaim a distinction in the Godhead, and speak of a Divine person, incarnate, the Messiah, Emmanuel, God with us, David's son, and David's Lord. Several express declarations to this effect we have already observed in the predictions above quoted, to which the following may be added.

In the 45th Psalm, the Messiah is thus addressed : "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness ; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Here, the name, the power, and the eternity of God, are ascribed to Jesus Christ. In the 102d Psalm, he is introduced as the Father's servant, beseeching him in his afflictions, " O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days." The answer of the

Father to this prayer, as quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews, immediately follows: "Thy years are throughout all generations; of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy 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." Thus creation is ascribed to Jesus Christ. In Psalm cx. 1, we read, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Jesus Christ, when the Pharisees were disputing with him, asked them, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, the son of David. He saith unto them, how then doth David in Spirit call him Lord, saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" Matth. xxii. 42. On that occasion the Pharisees were "not able to answer him a word, neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask him any more questions." David was both a king and a prophet; David's son, then, could not be David's Lord in any other way but by a superiority of nature.

In the 35th chapter of Isaiah, which foretells the flourishing state of the Messiah's kingdom, it is said, "They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." It is added, "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, then shall the lame man leap as an hart,

and the tongue of the dumb shall sing." All this was literally verified when Jesus Christ appeared, and has been fulfilled spiritually both among Jews and gentiles.

In the prophecies of Hosea, i. 7, it is said, "I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God." This prophecy refers, in its ultimate and full accomplishment, to the salvation of the gospel, which is properly denominated mercy; and it is here declared, that it is God himself immediately, without any second cause, who is to effect this deliverance. The deliverance from Babylon was not effected in this manner, but by the intervention of men; instead of which, the deliverance by the gospel was accomplished by the Son himself. Here it is God the Father who speaks, who declares, I will save Judah "by the Lord their God." Jesus Christ, then, is Jehovah our God, and, consequently, the true God essentially with the Father.

By the prophet Zechariah it is expressly declared, that he who was sent by Jehovah is Jehovah: "For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you, for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For behold I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants; and ye shall know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah. And many nations shall be joined to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me unto thee," Zech. ii. 8—11. Here the speaker, who, in the eighth verse, is called Jehovah of Hosts, de-

clares that he is sent by another ; but this other is afterwards said to be Jehovah. The foregoing passages, with many others that might be quoted, prove that the prophets testified that the Messiah who was to come is the supreme God.

After proclaiming his forerunner, who was to prepare his way, and saying, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it," the prophet Isaiah, in prospect of the coming of the Messiah, exclaims, "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain ! O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid ; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God ! Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for them ; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance ?" Isaiah, xl. 9—13. Here is a most sublime description of the power and glory of Emmanuel—God with us—the Good Shepherd, and the Almighty Creator of the universe.

Predicting the appearance of the forerunner of Messiah, Malachi, as we have already seen, proclaims as follows :—"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 ;

behold he shall come, saith Jehovah of Hosts." He, before whom John the Baptist came to prepare the way, was Jesus Christ; but it is Jehovah of Hosts who says, "Behold I will send my messenger." Jesus Christ, then, is here declared to be Jehovah of Hosts—Jehovah, who was to come suddenly to his temple. We may also observe, that the prophet, in marking the coming of the Messiah, characterises him, first, as "the Lord whom ye seek;" that is to say, Jehovah, who hath been promised to you, and whom ye expect. He next calls him "the Messenger of the Covenant," or rather the Angel of the Covenant, in manifest allusion to the Angel whom God employed in the first covenant, who is called the Angel of God's presence; and then he says, that it is he "whom ye delight in;" that is to say, the object of the universal desire of all nations, and of the whole Church. Lastly, the prophet shows, that the day of the Messiah will be great and terrible, and that few will be able to stand before him. This refers to that great separation of the righteous and the wicked which the Messiah was to make.

Messiah was also to be the *Son of man*. "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days; and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom that all people and nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," Dan. vii. 13. The person here spoken of is called the Son of man, to mark his humanity; but its being said that he was like the Son of man, indicates that the Messiah,

although he was to be a man, was not to be simply a man, but the Son of God, clothed with the human nature. He came with the clouds of heaven, which represents that all his economy is celestial and supernatural. It is said that he came to the Ancient of days, from whom he received dominion and glory, in order to show that his reign, as mediator, is delegated, in the exercise of which he holds the place of God his Father. The extent of his reign is pointed out when it is said that all people, and nations, and languages, should serve him. And lastly, its eternity is declared.

Respecting the Messiah's CHARACTER, the Prophets describe him as just, and having salvation; and yet lowly, as not crying, nor lifting up his voice in the streets; exercising his ministry with such circumspection and tenderness, as not "to break the bruised reed, nor to quench the smoking flax," Isaiah, xlii. 3. He was to feed his flock like a shepherd, to gather the lambs with his arms, and to carry them in his bosom, and gently to lead them that were with young, Isaiah, xl. 11. He was to be fairer than the children of men, grace was to be poured into his lips; therefore God had blessed him for ever, Psalm xlv. 2, 7. He was to be God's "righteous servant," "neither was any deceit in his mouth," Isaiah, liii. 9, 11. "Behold," said God, "my servant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth," Isaiah, xlii. 1. "Behold my servant shall deal prudently," Isaiah, lii. 13. How far this delineation by the Prophets of Messiah's character was verified, when he appeared in the world, need not be told to those who have read the history of his life.

In entering upon his OFFICE, in his public ministry, and claiming the character of the Messiah, which he supported by the miracles he wrought, and by the doctrine he taught, Jesus Christ employed the prophetic words by which it had been characterised by Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath appointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," Isaiah, lxi. 1. The same prophet, speaking in Messiah's name, says, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary," Isaiah, l. 4. Again, he says, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord. And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked; and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins," Isaiah, xi. 1. The same prophet foretold that "the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel," Isaiah, xxix. 19. And in another place, declaring that God would come and save them, he says,

“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap like an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert,” Isaiah, xxxv. 5. All these, and many similar predictions, were literally fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus Christ, and are applicable to no one else.

As a *Prophet*, in which character he had been predicted by Moses, he was to declare the words of God: “I have preached righteousness in the great congregation, lo I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation; I have not concealed thy loving kindness, and thy truth, from the great congregation,” Psalm, xl. 9. The peculiar manner in which he was to teach, viz., by parables, was also foretold. “Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old,” Psalm lxxviii. 1.

In virtue of his office, an unchangeable *Priesthood* was also to belong to him. “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec,” Psalm cx. 4. When the legal sacrifices are declared to be of no avail, the Messiah is introduced, saying, “Then said I, Lo, I come: In the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God,” Psalm xl. 7. Accordingly, Isaiah represents him as pouring out his soul unto death, and making it an offering for sin. And, by Daniel, he is spoken of as finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for

iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness. By Zechariah, xiii. 1, it was said that there should be "a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness," "As for thee also," says Jehovah, "by the BLOOD of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water," Zech. ix. 11. He was to make INTERCESSION for the transgressors, Isa. liii. 12. And all nations were to be BLESSED in him, Psalm xlv. 1. Thus it was foretold that the three great purposes for which the priesthood was instituted, *sacrifice*, and *intercession*, and *blessing*, were to be accomplished in him. It was likewise predicted that Messiah was not only to be a Prophet and a Priest, but also a *King*. He was to be a Priest upon his *throne*. Therefore, as a type of him, Joshua the High Priest was crowned. "Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord: even he shall build the Temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne," Zech. vi. 11. A little before, the prophet Zechariah had predicted the coming of the Messiah, under the name of the Branch; here he repeats the same thing, and enlarges on the two great honours peculiar to him; the one that he was to build the Temple of Jehovah, the other, that he was to be both a King and Priest. "Behold," says Isaiah, "a king shall reign in righteousness," xxxii. 1. In the second Psalm, Jehovah says, "I have

set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." He is spoken of as ruling in the midst of his enemies,* and as sitting "upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever," Psalm cx. 2. At his appearance, Zion is called upon to rejoice. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh to thee; he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass;—and he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth," Zech. ix. 9. Here a peaceful king is spoken of, who should be lowly, which does not apply to earthly kings. The mark given by which he should be known, is that he would make his entry into Jerusalem on an ass's colt. This is only applicable to Messiah, for other kings make their entry in triumphal chariots. This King was to speak peace to the nations, which marks the calling of the Gentiles, which is by Jesus Christ alone. This King was to reign over the whole earth, from one sea to another, which is fulfilled in no one but in Jesus Christ.

The above characters of Prophet, Priest, and King, are all applied in the New Testament to the Messiah, as exclusively belonging to him. As a Prophet, he declared himself to be the LIGHT OF THE WORLD; he proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation, and brought life and immortality to light. As a Priest, he super-

* This is a striking representation of power. Human governments can only subsist by destroying or banishing their enemies.

seded all other priests and sin-offerings, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and he ever liveth to make intercession for those whom God sent him to bless. He appeared as the King of Zion. "Is not the Lord in Zion? Is not her King in her?" Jeremiah, viii. 19. And from Zion his gospel was to be proclaimed. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," Isaiah, ii. 3. This second chapter of Isaiah contains three parts, all prophetic and remarkable. The first verse to the fourth inclusive, treats of the calling of the Gentiles, and the extension of the covenant of God to all the people of the earth, under the peaceful reign of the Messiah. The second part, on to the tenth verse, contains the rejection of the Jews, which is very clearly expressed. The third part, which includes the rest of the chapter, declares the elevation of the one God above every creature, and the bringing of all things under him; and it particularly foretells the destruction of all idols. Thus his kingdom was to begin in Judea, and his government is shown by the prophets to include all the promised blessings of righteousness and stability, peace and security.

There are numerous prophecies which foretell the SUFFERINGS AND DEATH of the Messiah. The prophets declare that he was to be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," Isaiah, liii. 4. Many were to be astonished at him, "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men," Isaiah, lii. 14. The Psalmist, testifying beforehand of his sufferings, says, "My days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. My heart is smitten, and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my

groaning, my bones cleave to my skin," Psal. cii. "Mine enemies reproach me all the day, and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.—Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness," Psalm lxi. 2. "I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me unto the dust of death," Psalm xxii. "Mine enemies speak evil of me; when shall he die, and his name perish? Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me," Psalm xli. This last circumstance refers to Judas, who betrayed him. "The kings of the earth did set themselves, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and his Anointed," Psalm ii. 2. "He was taken from prison, and from judgment. He was cut off out of the land of the living," Isaiah, liii. 8.

The RESURRECTION of Messiah from the grave, and his subsequent exaltation, were likewise foretold. In Isaiah, xxv. 8, after promising to enlighten all nations, God, it is said, "will swallow up death in victory." By the prophet Hosea, xiii. 14, God says, "O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction." Accordingly, it is declared, that after the Messiah shall make an offering for sin, he "shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand," Isaiah, liii. 10. These things are represented as happening after his death, and therefore suppose his living after death. "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me," Psalm xlix. 15. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied

when I awake with thy likeness," Psalm xvii. 15. His people are represented as exulting in him as their head risen from the grave on the third day. "Come and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us; in the *third* day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Hosea, vi. 1. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isaiah, xxvi. 19. The chapter which contains this last prediction is both typical and prophetical. It is typical, because, under the figure of the re-establishment of the Jews after the Babylonish captivity, it speaks of the re-establishment of the church by the Messiah. It is also prophetical, because there are things in it which belong to the deliverance of the Messiah, and not to that from Babylon, as in particular the words above quoted. These words are too forcible and too great to respect only a temporal deliverance. They belong, in the first place, to that spiritual and mystical resurrection which Jesus Christ has given to his church by his blood and Spirit; and, secondly, to the last resurrection of the bodies of believers, which will take place by his power, and in consequence of his resurrection. For here men are represented as attaining to a joyful resurrection from the dead, and that by virtue of the resurrection of the dead body of an extraordinary person. Referring to the short time he should remain in the grave, it is said, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (the grave, Gen. xxxvii. 35), neither wilt thou

suffer thine Holy One to see corruption; thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," Psalm xvi. 10.

The EXALTATION of the Messiah is also declared by the prophets. As they represent him to be in a state of great humiliation during his life, so those prophecies which relate to his exaltation must refer to his state after his death and resurrection. "He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation; honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him, for thou hast made him most blessed for ever." Psalm xxi. 5. "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive," Psalm lxviii. 18. When in the 24th Psalm, it is enquired, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place?" and after the answer is given, describing the perfection of Messiah's character, admission into the heavenly world is demanded for him, under the title of the King of Glory. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle."

In the sublimest strains, the Prophets foretell the PROGRESS OF THE KINGDOM AND RELIGION of Messiah throughout the world, as bearing down all opposition, extending itself on every side, and at length becoming universal. "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath," Psalm cx. 1. The whole of this psalm describes the exaltation and power of the Messiah, and the progress of his kingdom. 1. By their author,

who is God. 2. By the nature of the dignity to belong to him, which is to sit at the right hand of God. 3. By the success of his reign. 4. By the place where his reign should commence, and from whence it should extend itself. 5. By the nature of his subjects. 6. By the power of this king, and by the increase of power, or renewed vigour, which should belong to him. 7. By the union in his person of an everlasting priesthood, combined with everlasting royalty. 8. He shall judge among the nations; he shall fill the places with dead bodies; and particularly by the ruin of Satan's kingdom; "he shall smite him that is the head over a great country." Here the prophet alludes to the words of the first promise, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." 9. Finally, By the extreme labours which must precede the establishment of his kingdom, "He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up his head." The Messiah shall prosecute his victory over the enemies of his church, till they are all defeated and consumed; and this he shall do with such zeal and earnestness, that he shall not allow himself rest or respite; but he shall quench or allay his thirst with water out of a brook, which he shall find by the way, in pursuit of his enemies. In this last verse, the state of his humiliation and exaltation are both joined together. It is said, Isaiah, lv. 4, "Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people."—"I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison,

and those that sit in darkness out of the prison house," Isaiah, xlii. 6. The 60th chapter of Isaiah, from the beginning, contains the most magnificent promises to Zion, to be fulfilled by means of the Messiah, "the Holy One of Israel." "Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise on thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

The prophets contemplate, with the greatest delight, the extension of the Messiah's kingdom, and anticipate the period when "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it," Isaiah, xi. 12. Daniel declares that the stone "cut out of the mountain without hands," shall smite the image, and shall break it to pieces, and shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever," Dan. ii. 44. In this prediction, the prophet marks the mission of the Messiah into the world, and his birth, when he represents him as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands; that is to say, that he is come into the world immediately by the will of God, and by virtue of his Holy Spirit, by whom he was conceived of a virgin. It marks his abasement and seeming weakness at his appearance, when this stone is spoken of, which, in comparison of the great statue that Nebuchadnezzar saw, was as nothing. It

marks his exaltation, when it is said that it became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. It represents the power of his kingdom in four particulars. It cannot be destroyed by the power of its enemies. It shall never pass into the hands of any other. It shall consume all other kingdoms. It shall be eternal.* This is that stone of which it is predicted that the builders should reject it, but that it should become the head of the corner. Psalm cxviii. 22. It represents him of whom it was foretold, that he was to be for a sanctuary, but “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel,” Isaiah, viii. 14. This is that stone on which “whosoever shall fall shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder,” Matt. xxi. 44.

In the 72d psalm, the *blessings*, the *equality*, and the *extent*, of Messiah’s reign, are strikingly exhibited. “He shall judge the people with righteousness. In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight. He shall have dominion from sea to sea. All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed.

* The opposite of all these qualities belongs to the kingdoms of this world. They may be destroyed by the power of their enemies. They may be transferred from those who reign over them to others. They cannot consume all other kingdoms. Their duration is not everlasting.

Blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and amen."

The 49th chapter of Isaiah declares, in a very remarkable manner, the work of the Redeemer; the different reception he should meet with from Jews and Gentiles; the care of Jehovah over his people; and the enlargement of his kingdom. In the beginning of that chapter, the Messiah, describing himself apparently with an allusion to his being the seed of the woman, is represented as addressing the uttermost parts of the earth to listen to him, as about to deliver a message of the highest importance. "Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken, ye people, from afar. The Lord hath called me from the womb; and he said, I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth." Verses 1-6: The Messiah complains to Jehovah of the little effect of his ministry among the Jews; but an assurance is given to him, that nevertheless it shall be extensively successful. Verses 7-12: It is declared that, notwithstanding the treatment he should at first experience, kings and princes shall worship him: that Jehovah had heard him, and given him for a covenant to the people; the blessed effects of his ministry are also described, and the way that should be opened for it, where formerly there had been nothing but desolation and ignorance. Verse 13 is an animated address to the heavens and the earth to rejoice, on account of the great things that Jehovah was about to do. Verse 14: Zion, the church of God, on hearing this, and contrasting it with her present desolate condition, is introduced, complaining that the

Lord has forsaken her. Verses 15, 16, 17: God applies the strongest figures to convince Zion of her future increase, and of his protection. Verses 18, 19: Zion is called upon to lift up her eyes, to look around and to see the multitude with which she should be adorned, crowding and gathering themselves to her. Jehovah assures her of this with an oath, and that even the desolate places of the earth, which, as being now under the dominion of Satan, might be called the land of her destruction, should be too narrow for her, and those who opposed her should be far away. Verses 20, 21: Here she is informed of the enlargement of the numbers of her children from among the Gentiles, after she had lost her own children the Jews; and that she should enquire with astonishment, who had begotten her these, whence did they come, and where they had been, seeing she had lost her former children, had been a captive, and left alone. This was remarkably the case when the church at Jerusalem was scattered abroad. Zion was then desolate and left alone, forsaken and persecuted by those to whom she naturally looked as her children, and before she had received the others. But these were the very means employed to effect the purposes of her gracious Lord. Verses 22, 23: Zion having enquired whence this multitude of children came, whom she now saw flocking to her, and by what means they were collected, Jehovah answers, and describes her future triumphs. Verse 24: Aware of the power of her enemies, and of the awful darkness in which the heathen world was involved, she again puts the question, as if doubting the possibility of so great a change. Verses 24-27: Her doubts are answered. God himself will contend with them that

contend with her, and will punish them to their destruction. He will make it manifest that he is her Saviour and Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. In this prophecy of Isaiah, we have a very particular and minute prediction respecting the Messiah: his incarnation is declared, his prophetic office, his preaching to the Jews, the unbelief of that nation, his preaching to the Gentiles, the glorious success of the Gospel, the conversion of kings and princes, the glory of the Church, and that of its Saviour. All these things are contained in this prophecy, and it is not possible to affix to it any other meaning, nor to apply it to any other king than Jesus Christ, nor to any other deliverance but his, nor to any other Church but that which he has gathered by his gospel.

Besides the general strain of the prophecies respecting the Messiah, there are many minute particulars, towards the close of his life, which were foretold by the prophets, and are detailed in his history.

We have already observed one plain prediction concerning the treachery of Judas; there are also several others in the Psalms, both as to his betraying his Master, his being deposed from his office, and his untimely end. The *five* circumstances of his bargaining for a sum, his receiving the small price of thirty pieces of silver, his casting them down, his doing so in the Temple, and the consequent purchase of the Potter's field, are predicted by Zechariah, xi. 12, "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear; so they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of

them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."

When Jesus Christ was betrayed by Judas, and seized by the armed band, all the disciples forsook him and fled. Zechariah, xiii. 7, speaking of his sufferings, predicts this circumstance, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

When Jesus Christ was seized, he was taken before the Jewish rulers, who, after trying him, pronounced him guilty. Next morning, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against him to put him to death; and when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. By Pilate the Roman governor, he was again tried and condemned. All this was effected by the joint acts of Jews and Heathens. This concurrence is distinctly foretold in the 2d Psalm, 1, 2, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed." In the same Psalm it is added, 6-9, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The Roman and Jewish governments have indeed fulfilled this prediction. They have raged; they have imagined a vain thing; they have taken

counsel together; they have set themselves against Jehovah and his Messiah. God has also carried his decree into effect. He has set his Messiah on his holy hill of Zion; he has declared him to be his only begotten Son; he has given him the earth to its utmost bounds for his possession, over which, to this hour, he is extending his dominion—while, as with a rod of iron, he has dashed *them* in pieces like a potter's vessel. Jerusalem is destroyed. The Jews are scattered to the four winds, and the Roman empire is crumbled into dust. Never was a prediction more fully accomplished. Zion's question concerning the prey being taken from the mighty is now resolved, and the secret of her deliverance disclosed.

After the trial of Jesus, they did spit in his face and buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting," Isaiah, l. 6. The prophet Micah, in that remarkable prediction which has been already quoted, when he foretells that Bethlehem should be the place of the Messiah's birth, declares that "They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." When they led Jesus Christ to the place of crucifixion, "They gave him vinegar to drink mixed with gall," Matth. xxvii. 34. This circumstance was foretold. "I looked for some to pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," Psalm lxix. 20. In the 22d Psalm, where so many particulars of the crucifixion of the Messiah are predicted, it is said, "They pierced my hands and my

feet," v. 16. In these words, it is intimated that he was to be put to death by crucifixion, the piercing of the hands and feet being peculiar to that kind of death. Crucifixion was never used among the Jews, as is plain from the books of Moses, where all the different kinds of punishment are mentioned, but nothing is said of crucifixion. It was unknown among them, not only in David's time, but for several years after. The chief priests did not themselves pass sentence of death on Jesus Christ, they only found him guilty of blasphemy, and then alleged before the Roman governor that he had committed a crime against Cæsar in pretending to be King of the Jews. By giving their accusation this form, they succeeded in having him condemned to be crucified. And thus, contrary to all human probability, the prophecies which described the nature and manner of his death were accomplished.

"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture," v. 18. This was literally fulfilled. "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said, therefore, among themselves; Let us not rend it; but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," John, xix. 23. Whilst casting lots for the upper garment of Jesus was thus an exact fulfilment of the prophecy, it is remarkable in another respect. By the law, the high priest was commanded not to rend his clothes. Lev. x. 6. At the trial of Jesus, the high priest rent his clothes, which, being contrary to the law, violated forever the authority of his priesthood. But the garment of Jesus Christ, who was the true high priest, was left

whole and entire. "All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him," Psalm xxii. 7. This prediction also was fulfilled when he hung upon the cross: "They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, himself he cannot save. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth," Matth. xxvii. 39-41.

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani; that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," Matth. xxvii. 46. This is the expression ascribed to the Messiah, Psalm xxii. 1.

"But one of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water," John, xix. 34. The piercing of his side ascertained his death. It was also the shedding of the blood of the sacrifice. This circumstance was foretold by Zechariah, speaking of him, chap xii. 10, "And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." "And with him they crucify two thieves, the one on his right hand and the other on his left," Matth. xv. 27. This was an act of deep malignity, as nothing could have been contrived more effectually to discredit his pretensions, and to dishonour him. This circumstance, as well as his burial by Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, is foretold by Isaiah, liii. 9. "And he was numbered with the transgressors—He made his grave with the

wicked, and with the rich in his death." Bishop Lowth translates the last passage, "And his grave was appointed with the wicked; but with the rich man was his tomb."

The soldiers brake the legs of those who were crucified on each side of him. "But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs," John, xix. 33. Thus was fulfilled what was strictly enjoined and prefigured in the typical appointment of the Passover. "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof," Exodus, xii. 46.

The whole of the 53d chapter of Isaiah is prophetic, without type or figure. It refers solely to Jesus Christ, and it is not possible to apply it to any one besides. It contains a particular account of his appearance, his character, his humiliation, his work, his reception, his sufferings, his trial, his death, his burial, and his atonement, his success, his exaltation, and intercession, with many minute particulars respecting him. Neither the genuineness nor the authenticity of this illustrious prophecy were ever doubted. It stands in the Jewish Scriptures the unquestioned production of the Prophet Isaiah, recorded 700 years before the coming of Jesus Christ.

In the beginning of the preceding chapter, Zion is called upon to awake, and to be clothed with strength; and Jerusalem, the holy city, to put on her beautiful garments. She is reminded that she had sold herself for nought, but now God would redeem her without money. "My people shall know my name in that day, for I am he, Jehovah, that promised; and lo, here I am." Their attention is then directed to the glorious messenger, bringing good tidings of peace and salvation.

The watchmen who descry his approach raise the shout of exultation, and all are commanded to break forth into joy, because Jehovah had comforted and redeemed his people, and had displayed his power before the whole earth. They are to go forth from their captivity, to contract no pollution, and those who convey back the vessels of the Lord are commanded to be clean. But they were not to go out with precipitation, as if pursued by enemies and in danger, "for Jehovah shall march in your front, and the God of Israel shall bring up your rear." God's messenger is next described, who should be highly extolled. On the one hand, his glory should be so obscured, that many would be astonished at him; but, he should sprinkle many nations,* and kings should listen to him with reverence. Much unbelief would, however, prevail. "Who," exclaims the prophet, "hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" But this he immediately accounts for, by the lowly appearance of this messenger of God, so different from the expectation of the Jews, who looked for their Messiah's appearing in circumstances of the greatest external grandeur. The prophet describes him as "a root out of a dry ground;" "he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." Thus, Christ crucified is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. The prophet goes on to announce that he is despised and rejected of men; and having declared that to the Jews he appeared to be judicially smitten of God, this gives an opportunity of introducing, in the

* Referring to the blood of atonement sprinkled on the mercy-seat.

remaining part of the prophecy, the Reason of his humiliation, the Circumstances connected with it, and the glorious Consequences that were to follow.

So extraordinary and improbable a combination of circumstances—the greatest honours enjoyed, the utmost contempt experienced,—the meekness of the sufferer, who is highly extolled by Jehovah, yet forsaken and bruised by him under tokens of his heaviest displeasure,—the deepest debasement terminating in death, leading to exaltation crowned with unbounded success;—all of this first predicted, and afterwards at the distance of seven centuries verified, attaches such a weight of evidence to this portion of Scripture, as nothing but eternal truth could supply.

Thus we have witnessed a surprising train of prophecies respecting the Messiah. It is not a detached intimation concerning him, but a connected series of predictions uttered during the space of 4000 years. At the beginning of that remote period, we meet with a compendious promise, which includes the outline of all that afterwards follows. The first promise which mentions a common benefit to all the sons of Adam, is expressed in very general terms. It was made before God had rejected Cain's posterity, by preferring that of Seth. It was given before the restriction was made to Noah in Seth's family, and to Shem in Noah's family. It was then made to Abraham, whom God distinguished by circumcision from the rest of the family of Shem, with a declaration that it should be a blessing to all the nations of the world. It was next made to Isaac, passing by Ishmael, and then to Jacob, passing by Esau. It was next limited to one *tribe*, one small *town*, one *family*, and one particular *individual* in that family.

The *time* of the birth of the Messiah was then fixed, and the appearance of the messenger who should precede him foretold.

Many prophecies have likewise been pointed out, referring to the Messiah's person, character, office, sufferings, death, resurrection, exaltation, and the progress of his religion; to the reception he was to meet with from Jews and Gentiles; and to a number of minute and apparently contradictory particulars concerning him, which have been all fulfilled. These are contained in a book which is zealously preserved by the Jews, who are his most inveterate enemies, and which was also delivered into the hands of the whole civilized world, nearly 300 years before his appearance.

As the coming of Jesus Christ is so clearly pointed out in the Jewish Scriptures, it is of great importance to observe whether the determined and continued rejection of him by the Jewish nation, be founded on a distrust of the Divine inspiration of these records with the keeping of which they were intrusted, or whether it does not wholly arise from their mistaken interpretation of them. In the former case, the Scriptures would have produced little or no effect, and would have been kept by them, if preserved at all, probably to be made use of like the Sibylline books, or the pretended responses of the heathen oracles, as a state engine, useful only to manage and overawe the multitude. But that this was not the light in which they viewed them, we have the most indubitable proof. No juggling deception, nor underhand means were employed to support the Jewish dispensation. In this, as in other respects, it was entirely different from the heathen governments. The veil concealed the inner sanctuary from view, into

which the High Priest entered alone ; but all that it contained, and what he was to do there, as well as the particular interest the people had in his oblations, were fully made known to them. The Scriptures of the Old Testament were never intrusted only to the leaders, and kept back from the people, but were open to all, were read to all, and all were commanded to study them. Delivered to them in successive periods of their history, and recording events concerning themselves which that generation who received them witnessed, the Jews never entertained the smallest doubt of the authenticity and Divine authority of their Scriptures. The care and veneration with which they have preserved them in all the vicissitudes of their wonderful history, in their many captivities and long dispersion, abundantly attest this fact. They have all along admitted the authority of the prophecies, and have constantly applied them to their expected Messiah, while their obstinacy in rejecting him when he appeared is distinctly foretold by the prophets. It is, therefore, in their misinterpretation of the Scriptures alone, that we are to look for the cause of their rejection of the Messiah. This is a material point, an important link in the chain of evidence of the Divine origin of the Christian religion. Consistently with this view of the matter, and in full confirmation of it, a general expectation of the Messiah prevailed among the Jews, at the time of the appearance of Jesus Christ.

END OF VOLUME I.

